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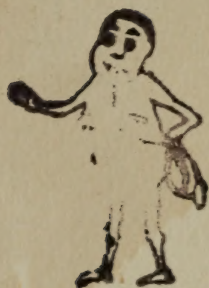
KING OF THE TURF



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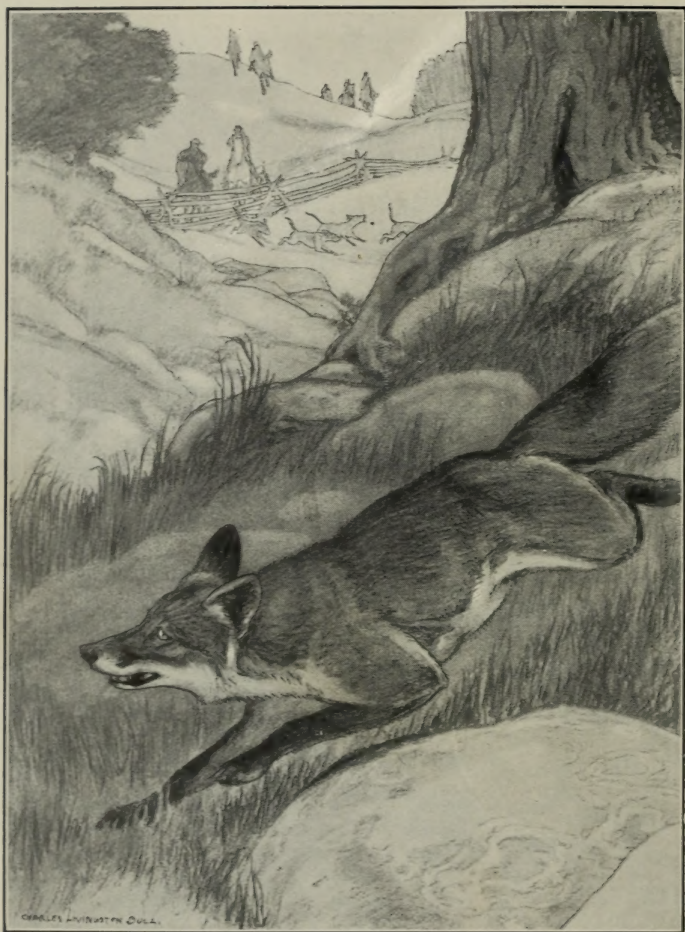
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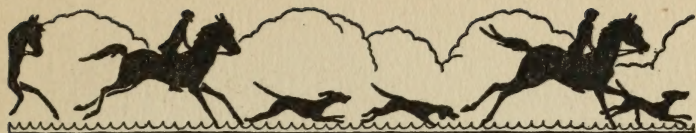
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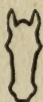


Red Fox turned and plunged into the deep wood.

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PAL O' MINE KING OF THE TURF



CLARENCE
HAWKES

ILLUSTRATED BY
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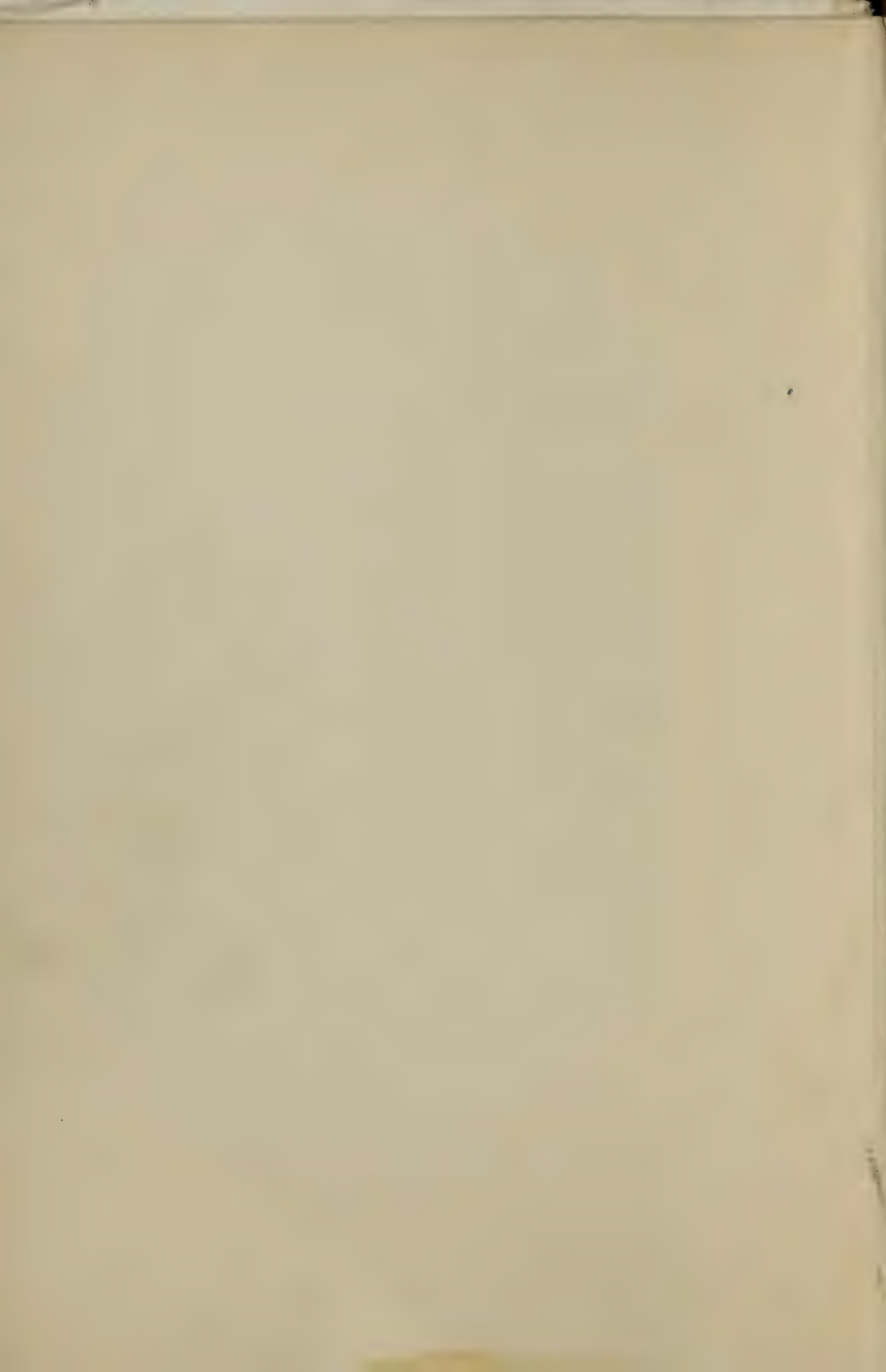
Bradley Quality Books

PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Dedicated to the memory of Jim, the
little black saddle horse of my boyhood.

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MAN'S FAITHFUL FRIEND, THE HORSE

WITH the possible exception of the dog, the horse is more nearly man's boon companion than any other animal. He accompanies man on all his great adventures while the faithful dog stays behind often nearly eating his heart out with loneliness because he cannot go too. It was a very common picture in the days of old, to see the master of the house represented as riding away upon his trusty steed, while the poor dog stood at the gates gazing pathetically after them.

The horse has played a most important part in history. His fleetness has many a time turned the destinies of nations, and decided great policies. All the great generals of the world have sat upon the backs of famous horses and watched those battles which have decided the world's history.

The names of some of these horses have become as household words. Rarely is a great general pictured either upon canvas, or in marble, but that he is mounted upon his favorite horse.

Men on foaming horses have carried important papers upon the delivery of which depended human life. Fearless riders have galloped ahead of floods and fires warning the people of coming destruction.

Cavalrymen, with their quaking knees pressed against the sides of their favorite mounts, have gone into battles which have made the world shudder.

Cowboys mounted upon fiery pintos have galloped wildly before stampeding herds of cattle, mad with fright; a misstep, a wrong motion and both horse and rider would be ground to pulp.

Indians on their wild cayuses have galloped on the outskirts of the Thundering Herd of Buffalo, almost touching the points of their arrows against the sides of the frantic bison as they shot.

The story of man's adventures with the horse extends far beyond the Christian era. It is found in biblical and other ancient history. The chariots and horses of the Pharaohs figured in song and story before Rome was even dreamed of. The Assyrians also were great horsemen, and their cavalry was the terror of the far East.

Roman chariot races are comparatively modern, but of unsurpassed glamour. Imagine if you can the great amphitheater, seating two hundred and fifty thousand people packed with the excited multitude while the gorgeous chariots, each drawn by four shining, gayly trapped horses, rushed madly by, each charioteer jockeying for position and weighing life and limb as of little moment compared with a victory in the race.

Such were the stirring parts that the horse played in the drama of these early centuries, before the Christian era.

But it is probable that we can go even further back than that for stirring events in equine history. The Tartars were won-

derful horsemen, and their cavalry was a great factor in the conquest of Asia. The Arab is celebrated in song and story as a horse worshiper. He makes his long trips across arid deserts upon his fleet horse, who is almost as much a desert animal as is the slow plodding camel.

In early biblical history little is said about the horse, but in later centuries he is freely mentioned.

The crusaders stormed the holy city of Jerusalem upon their chargers of Norman blood. For it was not until after the Norman conquest that England possessed really fine horses. The knights of old went upon their quest of adventure mounted upon steeds who figure almost as much in the stories of that period as did their masters.

A wonderful and dramatic scene was that enacted upon the coast of Spain when Sir John Moore left his cavalry horses behind as the English fled precipitately from Spain. The last they saw of the faithful horses, they were drawn up in battle array waiting the bugle call to charge. The old battle instinct

was so strong within them that they performed riderless and with no hand upon the rein.

Not only has the faithful horse engaged in all of man's dramatic scenes, but he has also taken an important part in the solemn scenes of his masters. He has figured in all the great historic pageants and cavalcades. Often in somber trappings he has drawn the beloved master to his last resting place.

The horse has more varied characteristics than almost any other animal. He has the fleetness of the deer, and the strength of the ox; the boldness of the lion and the timidity of a rabbit. He will thunder into the hell of modern war with his rider, seemingly unafraid, while on other occasions he will shy at a piece of paper by the side of the road. He is sensitive to a degree, yet will often stand abuse that would break the heart of almost any other animal. His fleetness and strength are the wonder of the animal kingdom, yet colic or distemper often carry him off without seeming reason.

He is gentle and tractable almost beyond belief, yet sometimes most vicious.

There is no domesticated animal under the sway of man so easily spoiled as the horse. A fool can do in an hour what a wise man cannot undo in a month.

The horse when in the hands of a skilful handler is as plastic as wax. He can be taught tricks seemingly marvelous, and his memory is often better than that of his master.

He is never lost upon the trackless plains, or in the forest jungle. When his master is lost if he has sense enough to give his faithful steed the rein, he will usually carry him safely home.

The range of the horse in size, color and general makeup is very great, all the way from a diminutive little horse found upon some islands in the Pacific, which weighs only about forty pounds to the mighty draft horse, weighing nearly a ton. There is as much difference between a thoroughbred racing horse and a Percheron draft horse as there is between a gazelle and a bullock.

Often the horse is wise beyond the belief of man to understand, yet often confused and terrified by the little things.

Such is the strange ingredients of which the horse's blood is made. His temperament and disposition are almost as varied as the number of horses. No two horses can be treated exactly alike.

What will make one horse, will spoil another. But kindness, all horses are amenable to. The horse who will nicker and paw at the sight of his master coming into the barn door, is a lovable fellow.

While the horse who will go frantic if you merely laugh at him is another expression of this strange horse temperament.

Having horse sense is a proverb which needs to be qualified. When sensible, a horse's sense is of the highest order, but sometimes he loses all sense and becomes very scatterbrained, because of his sensitive disposition, which some foolish driver may have upset.

Those who have not been on a horse's back can have no idea of the thrill which comes

from feeling that sentient bundle of nerves and muscles galloping easily with his rider. There is a rhythm about it which no musician has ever caught. It goes to the blood like wine. The rider seems to catch the madness of the wild motion till horse and rider are one. And that is what makes a good rider, to be one with his mount.

While the horse has been admired by good men always, yet no domestic animal has occasionally been so abused. Man's relations with this noble animal, in some of its phases, forms the most shameful pages in human history. Often have men bartered away for a few paltry dollars the love and fidelity which goes with a score of years of faithful service and the old horse who had really earned a green old age is doomed to wear out his last years in terrible drudgery, beneath the lash of an inhuman master. So his last years which should have been sweet with pleasant memories are filled with pain and anguish of mind and body. The men who sold Joseph into slavery are gentlemen compared with these horse Judases

who betray the old steed. Where in modern literature can one find so thrilling a description of the warhorse, as this excerpt from the book of Job?

“Hast thou given the horse strength?
Hast thou clothed his neck with thunder?
Canst thou make him afraid as a grasshopper?

The glory of his nostrils is terrible. He paweth in the valley, and rejoiceth in his strength: he goeth on to meet the armed men. He mocketh at fear, and is not affrighted; neither turneth he back from the sword.

The quiver rattleth against him, the glittering spear and the shield.

He swalloweth the ground with fierceness and rage: neither believeth he that it is the sound of the trumpet. He saith among the trumpets, ‘Ha, ha’ and he smelleth the battle afar off, the thunder of the captains, and the shouting.”

It is a great pity that the authorship of such a gem as the following toast to the horse is unknown. But it was found writ-

ten with a piece of charcoal on the walls of a Baltimore stable many decades ago and the poor groom who wrote it did not leave a clew to his identity. But all horse lovers will applaud the sentiment to the echo.

“Here’s to that bundle of sentient nerves, with the eye of a gazelle, the heart of a woman, the courage of a gladiator, the docility of a slave, the proud carriage of a king, and the blind obedience of a soldier. The companion of the desert plain, the one that faithfully turns the furrows in the spring, that all the world may have abundant harvest, that furnishes the sport of kings, that, with blazing eye, and distended nostril, fearlessly carries our greatest generals through the carnage to renown; whose blood forms one of the ingredients that go to make the ink in which all history is written; and who finally, in black trappings, draws the humblest of us to the newly sodded threshold of Eternity.”

PALO'MINE

CHAPTER I

THE HUNT

EATON MANOR stood in the very heart of the Blue Grass country of Kentucky, a region justly celebrated in song and story. It had stood there for over a hundred years, ever since the first Lord Eaton had built it. He was Lord Kendell Eaton, who had migrated from Virginia with Daniel Boone, and founded the state of Kentucky. Then this country had been a wilderness, where primeval nature held full sway, but now it was a highly civilized community, modified and subdued by man.

Eaton Manor was a large two-story house, with many outbuildings, not to mention the large stock barns and the long low tobacco sheds. The Eatons in days gone by had

been very thrifty well-to-do people, but the present owner, Colonel Hillery Eaton, had neglected the property and it had many signs of decadence. But Colonel Eaton still maintained all the ceremonies and pride which his ancestors had brought from Virginia over a century before.

The family silver and portraits, some valuable pieces of furniture and many other priceless heirlooms were still displayed with pride when the Colonel became mellow and talked of better days and ways.

Eaton Manor also still boasted some of the best horses to be found anywhere in Kentucky. The Colonel might let the rest of the farm run down, but horse breeding he did not neglect.

He was also the owner of the best pack of hounds in the Blue Grass country. The Eatons had brought from Virginia with their other traditions a fondness for fox hunting and the annual Eaton chase was still celebrated for many counties around, although fox hunting on horseback was not general in Kentucky.

The occasion of the Eaton annual fox hunt, which was held in November, was a red letter day in the county. Then it was that gallant men and fair women, mounted upon Kentucky thoroughbreds, came from miles around, over the white turnpikes to the Manor to take part in the annual event.

At such times the ancient household took on new life. The master and servants all arrayed themselves in their best clothes, and put on their best style, that Eaton Manor might do itself proud, and keep up its reputation for hospitality, fair women, and fast horses.

The morning of the Eaton annual fox hunt, of which I write, dawned clear and bright, with a tang and freshness in the air that went to the blood like old wine. It was late November and the countryside was looking its best. The oaks had put on their russet and maroon mantles, and every tree and shrub that could boast autumn color had donned its brightest robes, for the great event. The usual hazy blue of the sleepy Kentucky sky had become a little more vital

and a little bluer and this gave an added zest to the landscape.

Long before daybreak the grooms had been busy brushing favorite hunters and looking after saddles and bridles. Every buckle and strap must shine on this day of all days. The hounds also had been fed a light breakfast, for they must not be overfed as this would dull their scent.

The men and women also had been busy with their riding habits, for every one wanted to look his best on this great occasion. It was hard to tell when the different parties finally cantered away whether the women in their gay riding habits, or the men in their close-fitting red jackets, and their long boots, best adorned their eager prancing hunters. Certain it was that they made a gay party.

On this memorable morning all roads led to Eaton Manor and men and women might have been seen cantering along the white turnpikes from every direction even before the sun had capped the eastern hilltops. These hilltops were not much to boast of as

hills, although they were what was known as Saddle Mountain—a series of straggling hills several miles in extent. The southern sides of this range of hills were partially timbered and this was the best fox cover anywhere in three counties. The forest here was very open as the underbrush was kept well cleaned out, so the hunters could ride almost as well in this timberland as they could in the open.

Colonel Eaton on this occasion was all cordiality and joviality and as polite as any Southern gentleman could well be. There is no more courtly a host in the whole world than a Southern gentleman. The Colonel's sister, Miss Julia Eaton, was also a gracious hostess, so every one was sure of a good time on this gala day.

The hounds, twelve in number, were of the English breed, clean cut but with shorter ears than the American fox hound. This was a strain which was said to have come over the mountains from Virginia with the first Lord Eaton. Their cry was unusually mellow and to a fox hunter it was sweetest

music, but Reynard the Fox thought it quite otherwise.

As the hunting party fared forth on that crisp November morning, George Washington Jones, a utility negro at Eaton Manor, was in charge of the pack as he was the best handler of fox hounds in Kentucky. He was closely followed by the hunting party, the men coming first and the women bringing up the rear.

The master of the hounds led the way straight to Saddle Mountain and the hunters followed at a leisurely trot. There was no need of getting excited in this early stage of the hunt. There would be time enough for excitement after the fox had been started. That might take an hour or two. But the colored man had been prospecting about with a couple of trusty hounds for a week and had learned the daily habits and usual run of Red Fox, so far as any red fox can be spied upon. But Reynard is a sly fellow, rather restless and very suspicious. The things he does to-day he does not always do to-morrow, so one can not say just where he

will be found or what he will do when started.

Red Fox himself, the object of all this show, had spent the two hours before daylight down on the plantations. He had visited several farm yards and interviewed the poultry houses. As a result of his cunning he had come away with a tender young turkey slung over his shoulder.

He was somewhat of an epicurean, and often dined upon the very best fowl that the countryside could offer. Within the hour he had eaten his fill from the tender bird, which is so highly prized by humans.

Just at the bewitching hour of sunrise, when the old world is each day made over new, Red Fox had come forth from his lair. This was a little clump of scrub pines, in a sheltered gulch on the hillside.

Red Fox was well satisfied with himself and the world on that beautiful autumn morning, for was he not full of the best bird in the land? Had he not taken his breakfast from his enemy, man, under the very nose of one of those stupid dogs? Red

Fox's nose wrinkled savagely at the very thought of dogs. How he hated them. Most of them he despised for he could usually outwit them. Fox hounds however were different. He had to be on guard for fox hounds. They had such keen noses, and could ferret out one's track even though it had been badly snarled.

Red Fox came out on a bluff from which advantage point he could see far across the flat country. He always liked to begin the day by reconnoitering from that point. He stood upon the very edge of a precipitous cliff and stretched himself. He yawned and stretched again as though the world and the life of a fox made him weary.

He was a fine specimen of the red fox family as he stood there upon the cliff looking off across the country. He was a deep walnut sable, rather unusual in a red fox. On his back was a small black blanket, or saddle mark. He had black points, a black nose, and a white tip to his tail. His coat was thick and luxuriant, and his brush was very heavy. A well groomed fox and he had a

right to be, for had he not dined on turkey?

Although Red Fox had a seeming air of indifference, and nonchalance, yet he was alert. Alertness was his habitual state of mind. His keen ears were cocked and ready to catch the slightest sound. His sharp nose was constantly sifting the wind as only a fox's nose can, while his yellow phosphorous eyes saw everything. This was why he was such a good hunter. The slightest rustle in the grass was always noted by him, for this often meant a field mouse. Ground-birds' nests he found where a human being would have almost stepped on them and then passed by unsuspecting. Most of his living Red Fox had to take in the open. The farm yards were not to be relied on, but hunting in the fields and forest was his main dependence. So all of Red Fox's wits had to be of the keenest, else he would have often gone hungry.

Presently there floated up to Red Fox's keen ears a faint thin sound. It was so faint and far away that a human ear could not have at first detected it. Yet Red Fox

heard and immediately knew what it was. It was the first desultory bay of a fox hound—the note of warning that the hound gives when he has stumbled upon a faint suggestion of a scent. This in itself was not ominous, but there was no telling what it might lead to. So Red Fox waited and listened, all the time scanning the plains with his yellow, all-seeing eyes.

Presently the first desultory bay was followed by another and another and then the old leader broke into full cry, and a few seconds later he was joined by the entire pack.

The English fox hound is celebrated for his mellow, far-carrying bay and soon the valley was resounding with the full cry of the pack, a dozen strong. It reverberated from field to field. It floated faintly up to Red Fox's shelf on the rocks and the hillside flung it back across the valley. It was sweetest music to the fox hound lover. It was also music to the Kentucky hunting horse. For it meant to him that the great race was now on, no matter how leisurely his master had jogged along behind the hounds

before. This melodious music meant that they would go forward at a breakneck pace. It meant that the mad race, in which the horses entered as enthusiastically as did the men, was on. It meant that they would jump ditches and fences, climb steep hillsides, go tearing through the deep woods, plunge down deep declivities, swim rivers, and overcome any obstacle which nature put in their way, just to get ahead. Just to be nearest to the leaping baying pack.

At first Red Fox could not make out the pack or the hunters, but finally he discovered them a mile away across the white turnpike. First he saw the pack coming on at full cry and then the hunters, a dozen men riding rapidly after the eager dogs. With a little shudder of apprehension Red Fox noted that they had taken up his own fresh trail which he had made upon the turnpike when he returned to his lair with the young turkey.

Yes, his theft had been discovered. Man, who thought he owned everything, had discovered the loss of his turkey and he was

coming, with hounds and horses to punish him. Well, they would have a long run for their money. This was not Red Fox's first fox hunt. For three years he had eluded the pack, and kept his brush. He would keep it this time if he had luck. So he turned and plunged into the deep wood which covered the hillside.

In ten minutes' time the pack had covered the distance between them and the lookout place of Red Fox and were following along the hillside to the east. The horsemen very wisely kept to the low lands, riding along parallel to the hills, depending on the pack to keep the fox going. Even so they had to occasionally jump fences and ditches, and sometimes a limestone wall. Kentucky has two styles of fences, the limestone wall and the rail fence, and most of the plantations were fenced. The horsemen were in too much of a hurry to look for gates or barways, so they rarely stopped because fences were high. If a horse could get his nose over a fence he could usually jump it. So the noisy hunting party swept like the wind

along the lowlands while the pack and Red Fox held their more difficult way along the hillside.

Charley Anderson, a daredevil rider upon a tall gray mare, was always in the lead. Colonel Eaton, on his bay gelding, Prince, was not far behind. For although the Colonel was past fifty yet he was still a fearless rider, and it took a good man to head him in the chase. Three times in his life he had been first in at the kill in these annual fox hunts.

Major Miller, another Kentucky planter, was also well mounted and a daring rider. The Major and his mount were the first to come to grief, although the accident was not serious.

Charley and Colonel Eaton were well in the lead of the Major and this nettled him, so he was not particular in selecting the place where he jumped the great ditch between the meadowland of two of his neighbors. He came to the ditch where the further bank was high, and he and his mount rolled back into the muddy water and the

horse was so badly mired that it took several negroes to get him out, and thus the Major was out of the race.

Finally when the pack had run poor Red Fox twice for the entire length of Saddle Mountain and he was getting winded by their hot pursuit, he indiscreetly took to the plains. Here he encountered a dozen mounted enemies and his difficulties doubled.

The cunning old fox ran through bramble bushes, and along the bank of the creek, seeking to throw off his pursuers, but their noses were good. He then ran half a mile on the railroad track, but even this ruse gained him no advantage. Although a passing train did scatter the pack, they soon came together again and were after him in full cry.

Twice Red Fox raced across the plain to the creek and back to the mountains again, all the time losing steadily to his pursuers. So he again skirted the mountains, coming back on the further side, and crossing the end nearest to the Eaton estate, at the point where he had first been started. Here he

did some fancy winding about in and out in some thick cover, before he again took to the plains. This time he was a little more successful in throwing off the pack, but they finally took up the trail and before they had crossed halfway back to the creek, the pack were following by sight, and the end of Red Fox looked certain.

The hunters were also following the pack closely, the thundering hoofs of the galloping horses shaking the solid earth. Charley, on his tall gray mare, was in the lead, another planter was second, while Colonel Eaton was third. Poor straining Red Fox was perhaps a hundred yards ahead, with the pack fifty yards behind him. They were sweeping across the plains like a charging cavalry. The horses were now streaked with lather and reeking with sweat. Some of them were badly blown, but most held their wind well, for they were bred as running horses.

It certainly looked as though Charley would again be in at the kill and get the coveted brush, when a new factor was suddenly

injected into the race, one that made the riders gasp and rub their eyes to be sure that they had seen aright. For with a thunder of hoofs, the Colonel's nephew, young Halsey Eaton, himself but a lad of fourteen, tore frantically by Charley mounted upon Sultan; the unmountable, untamable prize stallion of the plantation; the horse that none of the negroes dared ride, and that was kept merely for breeding purposes.

The stallion had been a famous hunter when young yet had not had a saddle on him in five years. But all of his youth and fleetness seemed to have suddenly come back to him, for young Eaton was clinging desperately to the noble horse's mane with one hand, while he tugged frantically at the reins with the other. But the old fury was having it all his own way. He seemed unmindful of rider, and his every intent was bent on the racing pack, and his every ounce of racing strength was put forth in overtaking the hounds. Fences, stone walls, ditches were all alike to the wild stallion as he raced frantically after the pack.

“For God’s sake,” roared the Colonel, “go stop them, Charley. They will both be killed.”

But they might as well have tried to stop the wind, for the stallion was rapidly opening up distance between him and the best rider in the hunting party and coming within a jump or two of the pack.

What this apparition of the boy on the wild stallion meant, no one knew. All were thunderstruck. All felt sure it would end in a bad fall for the rider and perhaps the death of the horse. What had got into the boy? Why had he taken such a risk? For an answer to that question we will have to go back to Eaton Manor and see what had transpired since the hunting party left.

CHAPTER II

THE FINISH

COLONEL EATON was a widower, his wife having been killed while jumping her horse in a fox hunt twenty years before our story. His family consisted of his sister, Miss Julia Eaton, who supervised Eaton Manor, his nephew Halsey Eaton, and his niece Margaret Moore. Both Halsey and Margaret were orphans, but to their adoring uncle, the Colonel, they were as his own children.

They were of the same age, fourteen years, and great chums. Margaret was called by her friends Pretty Peggy Moore, and she was very much spoiled by all. This had made her very wilful and headstrong, and the Colonel and Aunt Julia often found her a hard nut to crack.

A violent scene had taken place between Peggy and her uncle that very morning.

This was when she insisted that she be allowed to ride in the hunt. The Colonel had stoutly refused and had reminded her of the tragic death of her aunt in the hunt. Peggy had stormed and coaxed but all to no purpose.

Halsey had also been refused the privilege of riding, and his uncle had told him to stay at home and keep Peggy company, and for both to help Aunt Julia with the festivities, as the fox hunt always ended with a great supper at the Manor.

So the young people had seen the gay hunting party ride away but had not been of it. Halsey had at once gone about several tasks for his aunt, but Peggy had retired to her room in a great fit of temper. An hour later Halsey had been greatly astonished to see her going out of the door, dressed in her riding habit.

"Hello, Peg, where are you going?" he had asked nonchalantly.

"After the hounds," the girl had replied grimly. "I am not going to be left behind, uncle or no uncle."

Halsey laughed and this further nettled the spirited girl.

"What will you ride on?" he asked. "A saw horse? That is all there is left. Every hunter in the stable is gone."

"I am going on Kentucky Babe," said the girl resolutely. "She used to be a famous hunter."

"Oh, I say Sis. You wouldn't do such a thing as that. Why uncle worships that mare and she only foaled a month ago. Why she would be as soft as butter. You might kill her."

The girl laughed and hurried away to the stable, while Halsey looked after her with genuine sympathy as he had been disappointed himself. He thought she had been joking and intending to give them a scare.

His astonishment could well be imagined when a few minutes later he heard a horse's hoofs on the turnpike in front of the Manor House. He ran to the porch with misgivings. Peggy was not like other girls. No one could tell just what she would do next, yet she had a heart of gold. Halsey's aston-

ishment could well be imagined to see Peggy mounted on Kentucky Babe, trotting down the turnpike.

“Peggy, stop; stop, Peggy,” cried the boy. “I say, you will kill the mare. Oh please don’t go, Sis. Uncle will be furious.”

But the wilful girl only waved him a careless farewell as she flicked the spirited mare with her quirt. Then Kentucky Babe broke into a swift gallop and they disappeared down the turnpike like the wind.

Halsey grabbed his cap and started for the stable. He must get some sort of a horse and follow her. Some one must be by her side. She would put the mare over anything that came in their way. Some one must be with her to keep her from killing both the horse and herself. As Halsey opened the stable door he remembered with chagrin that the only horse left in the stable was Sultan, the terrible. The stallion whom no negro dared bridle, much less saddle.

As the boy rushed into the stable, the spirited stallion threw up his head and whin-

nied, showing that they were on better terms than the people of Eaton Manor imagined. Although the grooms and trainers had frequently forbidden the boy going near the stallion, yet with the fearlessness of youth, he had often fed the great horse with carrots and apples, and even lumps of sugar. Also on several occasions he had climbed upon Sultan's back. The horse had pranced about some and acted rather nervous, but had not been vicious.

As Halsey stood by the stall hesitating, all the dreadful stories that he had heard concerning Sultan came surging through his mind. Especially vivid was the description of old Rastus of the never-to-be-forgotten time when Sultan had cornered him in the stockyard and tried to kill him.

He could see the old negro's eyes roll and the whites show as he talked.

"Yes, sah! Masser Halsey, dat wuz de time dis nigger suah done come close to smellin brimstun. Ah certin did. Ah got so scat inside, Ah wuz as white as a snowball. Ah suah was!

“Ah hates to tell dis here story cause it all sceers me up inside again. Ah sometimes dreams about it and then Ah hollers like Ah see a ghost.

“Ah suah did see a ghost dat time, an’ it was the ghost of old Rastus suah nuff.

“You see Ah had gone out into the stock-yard to drive the ole debble in. We did not know he was so ugly then. But de good Lord done put it into my woolly hade to take a pitchfork. Dat wuz what save my life. Ah wasn’t thinking much about anything in particular when dat ole Satan he jes r’ar up on his hin lages and come for dis here niggarr.

“He make his foe lages go like he tink he was a windmill, and his teeth they snap an crack like he was a bear trap. He walk on his hin’ lages jes like he allus walk dat way, an all the time he paw de air an snap his teeth fit to snap a man’s arm off if he done get out his way.

“Ah jab with de pitchfork an yell, but it make no difference. He keep right on comin. So Ah back an Ah back an Ah jab

away wid de pitchfork and finally Ah get through a do' into de stable. Then Ah bang de do' an Ah won't go into dat yard for all de money de Colonel gut. Ever since dat day, Masser Halsey, Ah don' trus myself wid dat hoss. No sah."

With this picture vivid in his mind it took all the nerve Halsey could muster to go inside the stall to the stallion and give him a lump of sugar from his pocket. The boy then stroked the horse's neck and he pranced and squealed. He seemed full of fire, but whether his spirits were good or evil the boy could not tell.

Finally he summoned courage to slip a saddle on the stallion's back. To the boy's great astonishment, with a wild squeal the stallion reared in the stall and broke his halter chain. At the sight of the broken chain Halsey's blood went cold in his veins. He was now at the mercy of the great horse. Yet Sultan made no further demonstration, but allowed the saddle girth to be drawn tight. Halsey had often seen him bite great pieces of wood from the edge of his manger,

or shake the chain viciously with his teeth and he hesitated before approaching him with a bridle. But valuable time was being consumed. There was no knowing what trouble Peggy might be in with Kentucky Babe. So the boy put his arm over the stallion's neck and bent his head down for the bridle. To his astonishment the stallion submitted meekly to being bridled and led out into the yard.

But when the boy mounted as he did with a quick spring, the stallion went into the air and for a few minutes the boy had to cling to his mane and grip his sides with his knees. Finally to Halsey's great relief he ceased his antics and in answer to the bit and a pull on the rein, he galloped swiftly down the turnpike.

In ten minutes they overtook Peggy and the Babe. They were loping along the turnpike at a good trot, Peggy having tired of the gallop.

"What are you doing on Sultan?" cried Peggy as soon as the boy came in hailing distance.

"I have come to look after you. You must go careful with the mare."

"I shall go as I please," retorted the girl.

"Uncle will be furious at you for taking out the mare."

"I guess he will be equally furious at you for taking out the stallion."

"I had to look after you."

"I can look out for myself and I won't take any orders from you. I hear the hounds. They are crossing to the creek. I am going to head them off," and she struck Kentucky Babe with her quirt and was off at a canter.

Halsey followed on the stallion. "Don't run her so fast and don't try to take any fences. She isn't in condition," he warned.

He had espied the fence between Eaton Manor and a neighboring plantation in the distance and sensed coming trouble.

"You tend to your horse and I will tend to mine," snapped Peggy.

As they neared the high five-railed fence, Halsey's apprehension grew. He headed the stallion in close to Peggy's mount in

hopes of persuading her to go to the north. There was a large gateway in the fence in that direction and he wanted to persuade her to wait for him to open the gate. In the meantime however the hounds came nearer and nearer and the girl's excitement grew.

"Margaret," cried the boy excitedly. "Let's go through the gate. It is the only safe way. The mare is in no condition to take that fence. It is a good jump for any horse in good condition."

"But we will lose a lot of time. I must be in at the finish."

"It will only take a few extra seconds. Let's play it safe, Sis. I will go ahead and have it all open for you."

"No," cried the girl. "The hounds are coming. Uncle said I couldn't ride fast enough for a funeral procession. I want to show him. I am going to take the fence." The boy tried to get in her way, but she waved him away with her quirt. He entreated and implored, but to no avail. So the headstrong girl rode the fine mare

straight for the high fence. Halsey kept the stallion close by her side in hopes of catching her bridle rein at the last moment. But even this ruse was frustrated. For with a sudden movement she reined the mare away from him and went at the fence a little upon a slant, which in itself was almost fatal.

Kentucky Babe had been a famous hunter in her prime, but recently had been kept entirely for breeding. In addition to that she was soft, and had also partly lost the jumping art. Besides, her rider did not steady her as she should have done. So, although she made a mighty effort, she landed upon the top rail and horse, rail and rider landing in a sorry heap upon the ground. Halsey tried vainly to rein in his own mount, but at this point in the exciting game, Sultan took matters into his own hands, or rather, his teeth.

Halsey had thought him quite soft-bitted, but now when he pulled with all his might upon the curb as they came within a rod or



Kentucky Babe landed on the top rail.



two of the fence, it was like pulling against a steel post. The stallion had taken the bit between his teeth and no rider, be he ever so good, could have stopped him. Vainly the young boy sawed and jerked upon the bit. The old horse would have his own way.

Halsey gripped the horse's side with his knees and clung to his mane as he felt him gathering for the spring. But the old war-horse made the fence with ease, and before the astonished boy could realize what had happened they were galloping wildly across the fields in pursuit of the hounds.

He looked back over his shoulder and to his great relief saw Peggy get to her feet. She was evidently unhurt, but the splendid mare lay where she had fallen and the boy feared the worst. After that he had all he could do to keep his seat in the saddle and guide the stallion as well as he could in the mad flight after the hounds.

In five minutes' time they overtook the stragglers and thundered on by them after the leaders. Again and again Halsey

sought to pull the stallion down, but he might as well have pulled on a church steeple. Finally they thundered up to the leaders. Halsey had a fleeting glimpse of his uncle's scared face and heard his cry of warning and his counsel to stop him, but he might as well have tried to stop a whirlwind.

The creek was now only fifty yards away. The fox was swimming for his life and was nearly across. The hounds were in mid-stream. Halsey had no sort of notion as to what the stallion would do when he reached the water, but he thought the horse would stop. There was a bridge a hundred yards further up stream and the other riders now headed for that crossing place. But not so the stallion.

He had become crazed with the excitement of the hunt and earth and water were alike to him. So when he reached the bank, with a mighty leap that carried them twenty feet into the creek, he cleared the bank. Halsey thought his last hour had come. The mighty jump carried both horse and rider nearly under. Just the top of the

boy's head and the tip of the horse's nose showed. Yet the stallion was equal to this emergency, for he struck out bravely for the farther shore. He gained rapidly upon the swimming dogs, so that he scrambled upon the sloping bank only a few rods behind them.

But this last short swim had taken the last ounce of fight and life out of poor Red Fox. He had made a wonderful run, but this was his finish. A hundred yards from the creek the pack overtook him and bore him to earth fighting feebly.

Halsey and the stallion came thundering up just in time to keep him from being torn to bits. The boy sprang from the horse and began kicking right and left to scatter the pack. Finally he beat them all off and with his pocket knife secured the coveted brush.

In the meantime old Sultan stood perfectly docile. One would have thought by his manner that he had never done such a thing as bolt with his rider in his whole life. Halsey patted him on the neck and

then climbed back into the saddle with the red fox's brush, just as his uncle and Charley came cantering up.

"You young scrapegrace, what do you mean cutting in on the hunt in this way? Didn't you know that stallion might have killed you?"

"He came mighty near it if I am any judge. What do you mean taking a horse and following the hunt without my leave?"

"I didn't mean to, Uncle," stammered the boy.

"You didn't mean to. I don't see how you could do it and not mean to. Don't you know there isn't a nigger on the plantation who would dare saddle Sultan? He might have killed you."

"Yes, I know they are all afraid of him. I didn't want to saddle him myself, but I—I had to, Uncle."

"You had to. What foolishness is this?"

"You see Uncle, Margaret she—the Kentucky Babe, she——"

"Margaret, Kentucky Babe, what has that got to do with you and the stallion?"

"Why I hate to tell you but you will know soon enough. Peggy got one of her headstrong streaks and soon after the hunt left the Manor she came down in her riding habit. She said she was going after the hounds.

"I just laughed and told her there was no hunter left in the stable and she said she would take Kentucky Babe."

"What, take my brood mare, Kentucky Babe? Why she foaled within the month. It would kill her to run."

"I told Peggy so. I did everything that I could to stop her, Uncle, but I didn't really think she would do it. So when she cantered down the turnpike, some one had to go after her and see that she didn't get into trouble with the mare. You know the Babe is very high like. There was no mount left but the stallion, so I took him."

"I see," said the Colonel, grinning broadly. Then the serious look came back to his face.

"But where is Margaret? Did you leave her behind?"

"You know the high five rail fence between Eaton Manor and the Mallery plantation?"

"What," roared the Colonel, a great light breaking through his consciousness. "You don't mean to tell me that Margaret tried to jump that fence?"

"I tried to stop her, Uncle. I really did with all my might."

"Well, young man, you might as well tell me. Are they both dead?"

"No," replied Halsey. "Margaret is all right, but I guess the mare is done for."

"Well, by the great jumping horned spoon! What will you young folks do next? Lead the way, boy. We must hurry."

It was a rather sorrowful and disturbed hunting party that cantered back across the fields to the scene of the disaster. Halsey led the way on the stallion who now behaved like a steady-going old hunter.

They found Peggy and the mare lying on the ground just where they had fallen in a sorry heap. The girl had her arms about the neck of the beautiful horse, and

she was sobbing as though her heart would break.

Her uncle was all sympathy and sprang from his saddle like a boy.

"Margaret, my dear child, are you hurt?"

The girl lifted her tear stained face and looked at him tragically.

"No Uncle," she sobbed, "I am not hurt very badly. Just a sprained ankle and a few scratches on the hands and face. But I have killed Kentucky Babe. She is dead. I know she is and you thought so much of her."

"Well," said the Colonel with much relief in his voice, "I did worship that mare. She was the best brood mare in Kentucky, but I think more of my niece than any horse. If you have escaped with your life we will not say too much about the mare. But let it be a lesson to you, Peggy. We must all be amenable to discipline in this world. We all have to restrain ourselves. I know you are sorry." And he kissed her affectionately on the cheek and straightened her disheveled hair.

"I never can forget this day," sobbed the girl. "I never will disobey you again, Uncle."

In the meantime Charley had been examining the mare.

"Yes, she is dead, Colonel," he reported. "She isn't staked and she hasn't broken any bones. It was just a blood vessel that she has ruptured, but it finished her all right."

"Come, Margaret, you get up behind me," said the Colonel, "and we will go home."

So they helped the girl up behind her uncle and all made their way back to Eaton Manor, the hounds following in the rear.

When they dismounted at Eaton Manor, Colonel Eaton invited his friends to come into the stable. This was after they had helped Peggy into the house.

"I have a little ceremony to perform," he explained, "and I want you all to witness it. It is rather important, sah."

When Sultan and the rest of the hunters had been stabled, the Colonel summoned all to meet in the long barn floor.

"Rastus," called the Colonel, "I want you

to bring out Kentucky Babe's colt. Halsey, you must stay too," he said to his nephew who had started for the house. "I want you especially."

"Yes, Cunnel, ah will try an bring out dat colt, but he suah hain't halter broke much yet. He is full of de debble. He is suah a chip ob de ole block. He has got as much debble in him as ole Sultan hisself. But ah will fetch him out."

Presently lively sounds came from the adjoining stable.

"Heah, you. Hain't you done learned whoa. Look out da, you step on your uncle Rastus."

Soon the old negro reappeared with a prancing, bucking, four-weeks old colt on a halter. As they came into the presence of the Colonel the colt capered about the negro in great spirits.

"He hain't done halter broke very good, Cunnel," explained the old negro. "He's got too much spirits. Ah hain't tame him down yet. Whoa, you."

It was certainly a very ridiculous little

horse to make so much disturbance. His appearance was almost grotesque, although he was so fiery. Like all small colts his head was about twice too large for his body and his legs seemingly twice too long as well. His joints were so large that they looked deformed, while his ridiculous little brush of a tail gave an additional ludicrous touch. But to one who knew horses, he was a wonderful colt.

Finally he was brought to a stand by the side of the old negro and the Colonel stepped forward and in his low pleasant voice said:

“My friends, I want to take you all into my confidence to-day. We have seen strange sights to-day. Things never seen on Eaton Manor before, sah, and I never expect to see them again. There is one among us, sah, who has acquitted himself like a true Kentuckian, and I am proud of him, sah.” He was looking full at his nephew as he delivered this utterance and the blushing boy retired behind one of the planters.

“Push the young scapegrace out where I

can see him," cried the Colonel in his most jovial voice. "I repeat I am proud of him, sah. He has acquitted himself like a Southern gentleman. A true Kentuckian has three virtues, sah. He has more than three, but these are paramount, sah. He isn't afraid of the devil, sah; he can ride a good horse into purgatory, if it is necessary; and he always protects women. This young man has fulfilled all of these three conditions to-day, sah, and I am proud of him. Now as a little expression of my pride I am going to present him with the best little colt in Kentucky, sprung out of the best brood mare in the Blue Grass country and by old Sultan himself. Here, Rastus, give me that halter," and he placed the end of the rope in his nephew's hand.

"Oh, Uncle, Uncle," was all the happy boy could say. A great lump filled his throat, but his face beamed with joy that all could see.

He had always loved horses, and at this moment all the warmth of his boyish impul-

sive heart went out to the homely little horse. He knelt down beside him and put his arm over his neck and brought the homely head close to his face. He kissed the now docile colt on his cheek and fondled his scraggly mane, and hugged him again and again.

“Oh you dear little horse. You are all mine. You are to be my pal. O what a pal of mine you will be. Why Uncle,” the boy cried looking up at the Colonel with a radiant smile, “that is his name. Palo'mine.”

The name was an accident, but it stuck. Not only that but this name in time became the brightest star in the constellation of Kentucky running horses.

But that was not all. Palo'mine was for four years the trusted mount of a famous trooper who never spared either himself or his beloved horse in his country's service. But his glory did not end even there. For when the flag was in great danger, and a brave army was threatened with annihila-

tion, Palo'mine carried the general to the rescue, as only a Kentucky thoroughbred could. So you see there are strange adventures and bright laurels ahead of the homely little colt.

CHAPTER III

PALO'MINE

AFTER the tragic death of Kentucky Babe, Palo'mine or little Pal as his young master sometimes called him, was denied his natural sustenance. So he was finally put upon another brood mare who had a small colt of her own and this gave him part of his rations. For the rest Halsey fed him cows' milk out of a bottle. This milk was sweetened so as to get him to take it. At first he was very scornful of the bottle and would shake his head whenever it was proffered him. But hunger finally brought him to terms and he was very glad of the bottle when his young master offered it to him. For the first two months Palo'mine was kept in a box stall, but he was finally moved into a paddock near the house. His young master was all eagerness to begin training him, but old Rastus and the

Colonel laughed and told him he must let the colt alone for the present and allow him to grow. But Halsey was permitted under the supervision of old Rastus to halter-break him, or rather to finish that lesson which Rastus had begun.

The very first thing that a colt is taught and this lesson is often taught him when he is only two or three weeks old, is not to pull upon a halter. He has to learn that certain things are fixed; that they are immovable and when he is hitched to them, it is useless and foolish to pull.

So Halsey under old Rastus' direction would slyly slip a rope over Palo'mine's head when he was not watching. Then when he found he was caught, the little colt would jump about and pull first this way and then that, and finally he would settle down and set his four feet and pull like a mule. Halsey was at first afraid that he would hurt himself, for he would pull until he threw himself, then he would lie quiet on the ground. But old Rastus only laughed at the boy's fears.

"Land sakes, boy, why dat colt wouldn't hurt hisself if he wuz hitched to a church steeple." "Whah it is good for him to pull." "You see he is nacherally jes full of tantrums and debbiltry, de sooner he pulls some ob dem out of hisself de better." "So you jes let him pull." "He won't break nuffin." "Don't you worry, chile."

After three or four lessons Palo'mine ceased pulling when the rope was thrown over his head. At which old Rastus laughed gleefully.

"What ah tell you, boy?" "Don' you see dat colt he done learned his lesson." "He done found out that he is not strong enough to pull down de universe." "Why dat colt he done learn quick." "He got horse sense." "He sure has."

Halsey also taught Palo'mine to come when he whistled for him. He did this by feeding him pieces of apple and carrot and also lumps of sugar when he was old enough for such horse delicacies. Sometimes when Halsey was working about the place, Palo'-

mine was allowed to nibble the sweet grass on the lawn and trot about with his young master. He would follow Halsey like "Mary's little Lamb." When he was nearly a year old Halsey was allowed to exercise him on a halter. He would put his arm over the colt's neck and with a little switch in his hand, teach the colt to trot by his side. In this way he taught him the walking, trotting and cantering gaits before he was a year old. These are the three natural gaits of a horse. When horse men speak of a five-gaited horse, they add to these three natural gaits, the single step, which is a modified racking gait, where the horse uses both his hocks and his stifles, instead of travelling stiff-legged as in the simple pace. Also a fancy gait called the "Spanish walk." In this gait the horse throws up his forefeet with each step and this gives him a sort of dandified appearance. This gait is only for show purposes.

When Palo'mine was a year old Halsey entered him at the state fair at Lexington, and to his great delight the colt took first

prize in the yearling class. This was one of many blue ribbons that Palo'mine was destined to receive.

When the colt was two years old Halsey was allowed, under the supervision of old Rastus, who was a very clever trainer, to begin training him. He first had to submit to bit and bridle. Halsey talked to him all the time while he was putting on the bridle and explained as well as he could that it would not hurt him. He also reinforced his arguments with several lumps of sugar, so that the bridle was mastered during the first morning.

Palo'mine was then taught to mind the rein. This took time and patience. Patience, a trainer must always have in handling dumb animals. He never can afford to get angry, or lose his temper. So training animals is a very good discipline for humans.

After Palo'mine had mastered the bridle and Rastus had talked long and persistently about making him soft-bitted, by not jerking on the rein, the saddle was taken up. At

first when it was put upon Palo'mine's back he thrashed about and reared, for he was very high-lifed and had never felt any such thing upon his back before. So he reared and plunged about trying to shake the saddle off. But here as in the case of the halter and the bridle, he had to learn submission. He had to know that this thing could not be shaken off and that it was put there for a purpose.

Then Halsey added a twenty-five pound burden to the saddle, then fifty and finally a hundred pounds. After that he got upon Palo'mine's back himself. This quite astonished the colt and he reared and bucked, but he soon found that his master could stick as well as the saddle could, and he ceased trying to dislodge him. Thus with patience, and perseverance, and by not trying to push his education too fast, Palo'mine was taught the elements of a saddle horse by the time he was two years old. Of course he was not perfected. He was just broken in, but this was a start and Halsey was very proud of his showing.

It must not be imagined that the friendship between the boy and the colt suffered any because of this training. If a trainer is kind and patient, the animal will love the master even more because he is subservient to his will. But in Halsey's case he not only gave the horse patient treatment, but the full and overflowing love of his boyish heart. He was naturally a great horse lover and since this little horse had been his own from the very first, his love for him grew with each passing week. And because he loved the colt and was so gentle and considerate he could do almost anything with him. So he began teaching him tricks, which also featured at the state fair later. And Halsey and Palo'mine became great pals.

In addition to the usual accomplishments of the saddle horse, Halsey taught Palo'mine many things which are not usually known to the saddle horse. He did not know why he was doing it at the time. He did it because he liked to work with his pal. But in after years when his need was very

great all these little accomplishments were to stand him in good stead. First he taught Palo'mine to stand. He could spring from his back and throw the rein over his head, and know he would stand, for five minutes or for an hour if his master did not return. Then he practiced mounting and dismounting while the horse was in motion. First he tried this at a walk, then at a trot and finally at a slow canter.

He not only taught the horse to drive perfectly on the rein, but he could also guide him by the pressure of his knees on the steed's side.

Of course school took much of the boy's time. But it was a pretty sure guess that if he was not in school he was either riding or teaching Palo'mine.

When the horse was three years old, Halsey began breaking him to the harness. Hitherto he had been only the boy's saddle horse and very much of a pet. Now he was to know what real work was. As a general thing it is not wise to use a saddle horse for the phaeton, but in this case it

seemed to do no harm, for Palo'mine was as different in the harness as he was in the saddle, as black is from white. It was not the intention to use him much in the harness, but Halsey's aunt, Miss Bliss, wanted to be driven to town occasionally and the Colonel said it would do no harm to teach Palo'mine the harness.

He discovered that the harness was quite different from the saddle. The breeching made him want to kick. It tickled and chafed his flanks in a very unpleasant manner. But Halsey talked to him when he first put on the harness and patted and smoothed the horse's flanks with his hands, and told him in horse language that it was all right. For by this time the boy had partly mastered horse language. In time he was to be an adept, but now he merely understood the rudiments of the horse vocabulary. For instance when Palo'mine whinnied joyously as Halsey came into the stable in the morning, he knew that meant "Good Morning." When he nickered coaxingly at feed time Halsey knew it

meant, "I am hungry, master." "Isn't it almost time for my oats?" When he rubbed his nose against the boy's face, that meant, "I love you, master," and when he went feeling in the boy's pocket, he was asking for a lump of sugar. When he lay back his ears, which he rarely did, that meant, "I don't like it." "I would bite, only that is what bad horses do, and I am never bad." When he shook his halter chain in his teeth and trotted up and down in his stall, as well as he could in that limited space that meant, "Come master, let's go for a canter."

So it will be seen that a horse has quite a vocabulary. There are many other words and signs and these are only the "A. B. C. of horse language."

When Palo'mine had mastered the harness he was hitched into a light two-wheeled gig and driven slowly about the place. He found it very hard to go slow enough. From the gig he went by slow degrees to the phaeton and at last to the family carriage which was an old fashioned carryall. But he was not driven much in this vehicle

as the Colonel said it would spoil him for a saddle horse and he wanted Halsey to have the best saddle horse in Kentucky. But it did Palo'mine no harm to learn all of these things.

In the autumn when Palo'mine was three and a half years old, Halsey and the Colonel put in a good deal of time hunting quail. They hunted with dogs, either setters or pointers. But the men themselves went on horseback and shot from the saddle.

There are not very many quail in Kentucky, but there were a few on Eaton Manor and other plantations near by, so the sport was quite good.

Halsey first accustomed Palo'mine to the noise of firearms by firing a five-shot Colt revolver from the saddle. At first the spirited horse jumped about and snorted, but when he saw it did him no harm, he stood quite still while his young master blazed away. But the Colt revolver was one thing and the shot gun was quite another. The first time Halsey fired from his back he bolted and nearly spilled his rider on the

ground. But the boy kept steadily at it and finally he could fire almost between the horse's ears and he did not mind. This also was a part of the training that was to stand both in good stead later on. But neither master nor horse were conscious of the events which were slowly shaping to take both where the smell of powder and the sound of firearms were a part of the day's work.

For tricks Palo'mine was taught the usual horse accomplishments. He could give his fore leg to shake hands when asked to do so, and he could bow quite gracefully when commanded. He could waltz either in the harness or under the saddle if Halsey was driving and gave him just the proper signs with the reins and the proper flick with the whip. But as a general thing Palo'mine needed no whip. At a word from the boy he would start from a slow walk to a quiet trot. At another sign he would break into the slow swinging canter, which jars the rider very little. There was nothing in his life that so rested the boy after

a hard day at school as a mad gallop with Palo'mine. To feel the sensitive quivering horse under him set his own blood to racing; while to feel the air rush through his hair which streamed about his forehead, and to see the trees, fences, and gateways rush by was like a mad moving picture—only they had no moving pictures in those days. Just these mad rushing horseback movies.

So boy and horse grew up and developed together. When Halsey needed recreation or play Palo'mine was always the one who furnished it. The first thing after returning from school Halsey went to the stable and he always carried an apple, a carrot, or a lump of sugar. The horse had a time piece of his own, or at least he was always watching for his young master at four thirty in the afternoon. Saturdays were wonderful holidays for them both. On that day they usually went for a long ride, often twenty or thirty miles. Sometimes on these occasions Halsey stopped at a likely looking

creek to fish, while Palo'mine was left to nibble grass nearby.

What life would have been without Palo'mine during his boyhood and his early young manhood, Halsey did not dare dream, and as for the horse he worshipped his master as only a good dog or a faithful horse can worship a man creature.

Halsey never allowed a groom to put a brush or currycomb on his chum. "If I can't groom him he can go without," he said. "I don't want any hand but mine to touch him." So Palo'mine came to look to his young master for everything that went into the making of his horse-life. Food, care, petting, and exercise, all these things came from the one he loved best of all. And this was well, for they were destined to see hard times together. So this friendship between them could not be formed too early and it could not be too strongly cemented together with the strong cement of a mutual love and respect.

If Halsey thought Palo'mine was the

finest saddle horse in Kentucky the horse was equally sure that his young master was the best rider in the state. No hand on the rein was like his. No one else sprang quite so lightly into the saddle. No one was so careful to see that the saddle was rightly adjusted. No one else watched for saddle galls as did Halsey. He never sawed upon the reins. He never spoke sharply, he rarely struck Palo'mine with the riding quirt, although he always carried one.

"Never ride without a whip," the Colonel had said one day. "It may save your life some time. You never can tell when you will need it to help you in a tight place." And since the Colonel was an authority on horses Halsey always took the quirt but rarely used it. He could get the same results with a slap of the reins on the neck, or a spoken word. But he wanted to obey Uncle in all things and besides perhaps the older man was right. He might need the quirt some day. So boy and horse grew to be one, in spirit and motion, and that is a perfect saddle horse and perfect rider. As

the horse moves the man moves. He is like an equestrian statue, a part of the horse. But the thing that made them one was not so much good horsemanship and a good horse, as it was mutual love.

As love me, love my dog, is a saying, with some boys, so love me, love my horse was a maxim with Halsey. If this had not been so they never could have met the great crises in their lives as they did, and come off more than conquerors.

CHAPTER IV

MASTER AND MOUNT

WHEN Halsey Eaton was eighteen years and Palo'mine was four they were as fine a specimen of a young man and mount as could have been found anywhere in Kentucky. From the slip of a boy who had ridden Sultan so successfully in the great fox hunt, Halsey had developed into a stalwart young man, large and well formed for his age. He was five feet ten inches in his stocking feet and weighed one hundred and sixty pounds. He had made good at the Blue Grass Academy in baseball and other athletics. He had camped and tramped and rode horseback in the Cumberland mountains. During his vacations he had lived out of doors for weeks at a time. The sun and the wind had tanned his face until he was as brown as a berry, while every

muscle in his wiry body was like whipcord. He was also a popular boy with his mates. This was because he was always good-natured and generous, and a good sport, no matter what the game.

Palo'mine as a companion and a splendid specimen of a Kentucky thoroughbred was not much behind his young master. He was a dark rich chestnut with a white crescent in his forehead and when his coat was at its best it shone like satin.

He stood sixteen hands at the withers, and weighed ten hundred and fifty. He was built as a Kentucky thoroughbred should be. He was lean, muscular, and with little superfluous fat.

His shoulders and his hind quarters were powerful and the muscles played under his shining coat when he ran, as though his mechanism was oiled. His mane and tail were heavy and darker than his coat.

His crest was beautifully arched and he held his head as though he fully appreciated his breeding.

His ears were small and expressive. He

was wide between his great liquid eyes, which always looked at the world in a wondering way, except when he ran and then they blazed with the fire of ambition.

His limbs were clean cut and his hoofs were small for his size. He took his fences with an ease that made you think he was full of steel springs, as he really was.

Halsey had taught him the hunter's art and was very proud of Palo'mine. He had finished second during the past two years in the great hunt and that was a wonderful achievement for a boy still in his teens. This annual fox hunt brought together some of the best hunters and riders in the Blue Grass country.

Halsey's first experience in open field riding had been gained on moonlight nights when he and a half dozen other men and boys rode after the coon dogs in that exciting autumn sport of raccoon hunting.

In the early autumn the corn fields were the favorite feeding ground of the raccoons and the hunting party would start them with the pack of specially trained coon dogs

and then ride after the pack until the raccoon treed or holed, and he usually treed.

This riding was of the roughest sort, through cornfields, over fences, and it usually ended in one of the woodland pastures where the coon was quite apt to take refuge. If treed in the forest Mr. Coon could run from tree to tree and so make his capture doubly difficult.

In the woodland it was often rather dark and this gave an added thrill to the hazard of riding after the pack.

Halsey had begun training Palo'mine for fence jumping when he was only two years old. He had begun by jumping him over low hurdles and had increased the height by degrees, until he could now take a six foot fence with ease.

He was also a famous ditch jumper and could take a flying leap that made his rider's hair fairly stand up.

But it was on their long rides through the mountains that the boy and horse had become the best companions. In this companionship they were alone together, with

the blue sky above them and the great dreamy mountains all about them. Many a night Halsey had slept with his head pillowed upon the saddle and with Palo'mine only a few feet away munching oats. This was his best night lullaby: the sound of the fine horse munching his supper, while the whippoorwill called in the thicket, the great owl hooted in the distant woods, or perhaps a little stream sang its drowsy song that is so soothing to tired nerves and aching muscles.

Halsey little dreamed as he took these pleasant horseback trips alone through the mountains, what they were training him for.

He little imagined the stern drama in which he and Palo'mine should play an important part in the years to come.

Summer had come and gone in the Blue Grass country, and September skies brooded over the land. The corn was in the shock, the tobacco hung in the long low sheds, curing. The persimmons were ripe and the opossum was fat. This meant that the

young men had enjoyed many a possum hunt, on the moonlight nights, and that many a fat possum had weltered in the brown gravy upon the platter for dinner.

Halsey Eaton had made his plans to go away to the great college at Lexington and he was to take Palo'mine with him. There was a fine race track on the fair ground in Lexington. It was one of the fastest tracks in the country and he wished to work out Palo'mine as a racer.

Hitherto he had merely used the fine horse as a hunter and a pleasure steed, but now he wished to see what racing stuff he had in him. Colonel Eaton had himself made arrangements with a Lexington jockey to help in the training. So there was the promise of a wonderful year ahead. Halsey could not have told whether he was most excited about his studies, or the thoughts of training his beloved steed.

It was as a thunderbolt out of a clear sky in midsummer when old Rastus came running into the house one morning crying: "Ah say, Palo'mine is done gone. His stall

is as empty as an empty 'tater skin. He is gone. I done look at heem late las night. He is stole." Halsey raced to the stock barn, to find the old Negro's report was only too true. They searched the other stables and the outbuildings, but there was no trace of Palo'mine. Then the plantation was scoured from end to end, but Palo'mine had disappeared. Every negro on the plantation joined in the search, for Halsey was a prime favorite with them, but by nightfall nothing had been seen or heard of the horse. The Colonel was furious and Halsey was heartbroken. Finally the Colonel gave it as his opinion that the valuable horse had been stolen.

"I am mighty sorry, Halsey my boy. I would have given five hundred dollars rather than see it happen. But I am afraid the horse thieves have got him. I doubt if we ever see him again, but I will do everything that I can."

At the thought of losing his pal forever a great lump filled the boy's throat. He and

Palo'mine were such chums. He had made such wonderful plans for the years ahead. He could not stand it. He would give up going to college if Palo'mine could not go with him. Why, he had depended upon Palo'mine to keep him from being lonesome. "Uncle," he cried. "I will find him. I won't go a step to college without him. I am going to find him." "All right boy, I am with you. We will see what can be done in the morning."

This was before the days of telephones but in the morning telegraph wires were set to clicking. A description of the horse was wired to every city in the state. Newspapers printed long ads for his discovery and recovery and a reward of five hundred dollars was offered for his safe return and no questions asked.

Halsey ate a hasty breakfast, as much of a meal as he could swallow with the great lump in his throat, and set off on another Kentucky thoroughbred to scour the country. He returned home in the late evening

having covered forty miles. He had made a great half circle to the south, but had not seen or heard the slightest sign of the missing horse. The following morning he again set out and they did not see him again at the plantation for a week. While the young man was gone, sheriffs and constables from the surrounding cities were hunting. Several clues were run down, but all proved futile.

In the meantime Halsey was not idle. He rode from town to town. He interviewed all the police heads and sheriffs in the different towns. He consulted all the toll keepers on the turnpikes. He interviewed all the tavern keepers, and saw the hostlers in all the stables, but no one had seen Palo'mine.

At last the week for entering college came round, but Halsey kept right on in his search. He had said he would not go to college without Palo'mine and he meant to keep his word. Finally on the eighth day of his search he heard of a band of gypsies who were camping in a town ten miles away.

This might be a possible chance. Gypsies were habitual horse thieves. Perhaps this band had his chum.

So on the following morning, at just sunrise, the young man in company with two constables descended upon the camp. They found the head of the band, a dark, sinister hairy faced man, just crawling out of his covered wagon. He was very surly and very indignant that they had come to his camp on such an errand. He had no such horse and had not seen such a steed. He would knife them if they didn't get out. But the constables showed him their badges and he subsided from his blustering attitude. They searched the camp from end to end, and looked over the horses, but Palo'mine was not there. They were about to give up in despair when a bright thought came to Halsey. Somehow he had a feeling that Palo'mine was there. He thought the dark sinister man looked guilty. The boy had noted a startled look in his eyes when he saw the constables' badges. He would leave no stone unturned. So he went from

end to end of the camp whistling in a shrill high keyed whistle. This was the signal with which he had called Palo'mine when he was a small colt in the paddock. He had used it often since. If the horse was anywhere in hearing he would answer. But the whistling seemed to give no better results than the search had done. They were at the farther end of the camp away from the road and near to a thick woods, when Halsey gave one last despairing whistle. He thought it was answered by a very faint whinnying away in the deep woods but he was not certain. So he repeated the call. This time there was no mistaking the answer, it was a glad and almost continuous nickering. It seemed to say, "Here, here, here, don't go away, master." "I am here." "I cannot come to you." "Come to me."

Halsey and the two constables made all haste into the woods, the dark man following them. "I have a sick horse here in the woods," he explained, when he saw that it was useless to conceal the fact further, "but he is not at all the horse you describe. We

found him in the road yesterday, and as he seemed to be lost we brought him along."

In answer to Halsey's repeated whistles the glad whinnys soon brought them to the place where a tall proud chestnut was hitched with a strong halter to a small tree.

"That's Palo'mine," cried Halsey rushing forward.

"It's not the horse you describe," said the man. "You say your horse has a white crescent on his forehead. This horse is all chestnut."

"That's what I said," replied the young man. "You come around and look on this horse's forehead."

Halsey could hardly believe his eyes when he looked for the white crescent. It was gone.

The Gypsy laughed at his evident discomfort. "I told you this is not your horse," he said. "This horse is a chestnut." The chestnut gelding's delight with the coming of the young man was only too apparent. It was like the reunion of two long parted friends. The horse rubbed his nose against

the boy's cheek again and again. He nick-ered each time Halsey whistled and in other horse ways displayed his great joy. But Halsey was confounded as to the crescent.

Finally one of the constables who was an old horse man began examining the horse's forehead critically. He parted the hair and examined it close to the skin. At last he grinned broadly at the discomfited Gypsy.

"Dye," he finally said laconically. "You did not do a very good job. It is an old trick, but you didn't get away with it this time. Then he parted the hair upon the horse's forehead and showed Halsey that the hair was still white close to the skin. The dye also rubbed off on the fingers after wetting them and rubbing it.

At first the Gypsy denied the accusation stoutly, but seeing his words had no effect upon the constables he pulled out a fat wallet and offered to settle.

"What do you say, young man?" asked the constable. "We ought to nab him now we have caught him. But I will leave it entirely to you. If he wants to settle for all

the expense your uncle has been to, I will let him off if you say so."

Halsey was young and inexperienced and of a generous disposition. So when the Gypsy thief had counted out five hundred dollars and pressed it into his hand, he said "Let them go."

So the constables and Halsey started back to the city, while the Gypsy band hastily broke camp and disappeared from that part of the country. They had no mind to risk a chance of a lynching in a country where horse stealing is held as a heinous crime. But Halsey turned his face towards Eaton Manor and two days later rode up to the house with his beloved Palo'mine.

But the rejoicing at Eaton Manor over the return of Palo'mine was soon dimmed, for he almost immediately evinced symptoms of distemper. He had probably taken cold while being tied in the woods by the Gypsies, or that was what the veterinary thought. Halsey had noted that he was unusually short of breath during the ride home, but had not dreamed that he was sick.

Old Rastus, who was almost as much of a horse doctor as the real veterinary, shook his head and pronounced Palo'mine a very sick horse. "Ah don' like to discourage you, Massa Halsey, when you hez jus had so much trouble bout dat hoss, but Ah afeered that he is going to heb a close call, Ah suah am."

Rastus set to work under the veterinary's instructions to do what he could for the horse. He coughed and choked intermittently and sometimes seemed very much distressed for breath. His eyes and his nose ran and his breathing was very wheezy. The treatment was to steam his neck and thus keep down the swelling in the throat. He was put upon a bran feed and given physic.

Halsey could hardly be persuaded to go to the house for his meals, but hovered about his pal constantly.

"Masser Halsey," said old Rastus one day when they had been working over the splendid horse constantly for three days, "we can't do nothin more for him. He will jes

hev to get well or die, jes as the good Lord says, you and me is powerless.”

“But uncle Rastus, I can’t have him die. Why, I have just found him. Why, he is my brother. I can’t ever go to college without him.”

“Well, Masser Halsey, Ah hope he gets well, but I don’ know. He is powerful sick. Ah hain’t never seen a sicker hoss. But we will hope for the best. But you can’t help none jes hanging round here. You jes go along like he was all right. Dat is de best way. Ah’ve seen lots of good ’hosses, an somethin is allus ailin em. Dey is as ornery as folks bout being ailing.”

Halsey tried to take Rastus’ advice, but found it hard work. He tried to make plans for being away to college, but it seemed to him that everything would be spoiled if he could not take Palo’mine with him. He had lotted as much upon training the horse as he had upon the college life. But all things come to an end, and so Palo’mine’s sickness reached the critical stage. Rastus

and the boy hung about him and fussed over him continually. Palo'mine was so weak he could no longer stand.

Halsey would not go into the house to sleep, but said he would stay up with Palo'mine. He could not bear to leave him alone, when he was so sick. So old Rastus finally went home and the boy was alone with his chum. He smoothed out the beautiful horse's foretop and talked to him. "You must buck up, old Pal. I can't have you die, you are my best pal. I won't go to college without you. You just take a brace—I'll stay right here by you."

Palo'mine was in a large box stall, and as Halsey did not want to be far away from him, he threw down a bundle of straw and lay down beside his horse friend. They had camped before together so many times in the mountains. He would camp with him now. It might be their last night together.

The Colonel coming to the barn at about midnight found the tired-out boy sleeping beside the horse in the stall. Halsey was sleeping like a log, and Palo'mine was

breathing naturally and seemed much better. The Colonel at once awoke his nephew and told him the good news.

“He’s sure escaped the Epperzootic dis time,” said the old negro, “an’ your uncle Rastus is one happy nigger. He’s goin to get well sure as preachin.”

With this good news, all repaired to the house for sleep after the long vigil.

With his natural strength to help him, Palo’mine regained his health by leaps and bounds and in two weeks he was entirely well. It was a happy day for both him and his young master, when they cantered away towards Lexington. Both were going to college. Halsey was to learn at the college while Palo’mine was to be taught the art of racing, at the hands of one of the best jockeys in Kentucky. Halsey was also to help in the training, and they would be together. So everything had come out well after all. Master and mount were again together. The trees and fences, and the broad fields, were flying past them. The joy of youth was in both the veins of the Ken-

tucky thoroughbred, and those of the young man. Life with its adventures and its joyous battle, was all ahead of them, the sun was bright, the sky was fair, and all was well.

CHAPTER V

THE SPECTER

HALSEY and Palo'mine reached Lexington after three days of leisurely riding. They were dusty and tired, but very happy, or at least Halsey was happy and judging from his actions Palo'mine was happy also. But he simply signified it in horse ways and it needed a horse lover to understand his language. If Halsey dismounted and left him he watched his going until he disappeared in the distance and he was always watching when the boy returned. He usually greeted his master with a glad nicker, which said in horse language "Hello, Master. Here I am. You see I have not even stirred from my tracks since you left."

Often when the boy patted his neck, or smoothed out his foretop and mane, he would go prospecting with his soft nose in

the young man's pockets for a lump of sugar.

First, after reaching the city a suitable stable had to be obtained for Palo'mine. As Halsey carried letters of introduction from his uncle to several of the best stable-keepers in the city that was not hard. Yet Halsey did not take the first thing that offered, but searched until he found an ideal stable, for he was more particular about Palo'mine's quarters than about his own. He finally found a clean, well ventilated, sunny stable, not too far from the campus. After having made his beloved horse comfortable Halsey went to the campus and secured his own room at one of the dormitories.

For the first month college life and getting settled took much of the boy's spare time. He had to furnish his room and hang the pictures which had been sent from home. Then he had to get accustomed to his classes and the college curriculum.

It did not take him many days to fall in love with the old college. The campus with

its complement of old style buildings, its shade trees, its green lawns, its walks, and promenades, its fountains and shrubbery, and its flower beds became as familiar and much beloved a picture as was the homestead of Eaton Manor.

The student life also was very interesting, the initiations, the fraternities, the rushes, and the rivalry between classes. These all gave the usual zest to Halsey's first few weeks at the college.

But no day was ever so full that the boy did not steal away to the stable and put in some time with Palo'mine. The fine horse was the one connecting link with home. So when the boy was homesick, he would go and tell it all to Palo'mine.

Nor was it all taken out in talk, for they took many a long ride in the late afternoons and even far into the moonlit autumn nights.

Halsey was very much surprised when he finally presented Palo'mine to the trainer to have him laugh and shake his head.

"Oh, he is all right," he said in answer to the boy's surprised look and solicitous

words. "He is a thoroughbred all right and a beauty. The trouble with him can be easily remedied. He is altogether too fat. He must be stripped to just nerve and muscle for a racer."

"But I don't think he is fat at all," rejoined the boy. "I have always kept him hard and fed him little corn or other fattening grains."

"Oh yes, I suppose so," returned the jockey. "But a racer must be all bone and muscle. There must be nothing superfluous. He must be brought down at least fifty pounds. He ought not to weigh more than a thousand pounds for a race. You see a race horse is just a large greyhound."

"How can we accomplish it?" inquired Halsey.

"Work and plenty of it, and then some," replied the jockey laconically. "Can you stand it, young man? It will be hard work. Work for you both; it will take patience and sweat, but it will pay."

"Sure I can stand it. That is what I am here for."

“Good,” replied the jockey, whose name was Jock McBride, “we will get at him at once.”

Halsey thought he was used to the saddle and he thought he knew what hard riding was, but the Kentucky jockey soon taught him that he was a novice. Every afternoon when college duties were over Palo'mine and his master were on the road. The jockey would not let them go upon the track for a month. He said that the superfluous fat must be worked off and the muscles hardened before there would be any use of getting down to the real business of developing a racer.

At first they were to do fifteen miles a day under certain conditions, then it was increased to twenty. Then twenty-five and thirty, until finally forty was reached. This long day's work could only be undertaken on Saturday afternoons and then it often took the young man until midnight to complete the trip.

But this work did not interrupt the boy's studies, for it gave him just the needed bal-

ance of mental and physical culture. It hardened every sinew in his body and that in turn made his brain work equally well. His thoughts were as clear as the fresh autumn air, and it was a joy to study and master hard problems.

It was a very exciting day when the jockey finally said they would go upon the track and see what Palo'mine could really do.

But even then he was not put under a watch, for there was much technique of the race to be mastered, especially the start which is very important in a running race.

If a horse gets ten or twenty feet at the start, provided the horses are all equally good, he wins. Twenty feet at one point in the race are just as good as twenty at another. So the start is very important.

The jockey would stand with the flag in his hand, and when he dropped it they were off. Halsey hated to strike Palo'mine with the quirt to give him the signal, but the spirited horse soon learned that he was to strike his best pace at one stride once the signal was

given, so it was not necessary to more than flick him after a little.

At first they worked out on half a mile. When the jockey held the watch on Palo'mine for the first time he was rather pleased, as he did it in fifty-five seconds, which was not bad for a green horse.

"We'll keep at him," said the jockey, "and we will soon lower that. We have got to scale that down a lot before he will be a real runner."

When the jockey himself mounted Palo'mine Halsey wanted to shout. He sat the horse so easily, and was so much a part of the steed that it was a joy to see him. Palo'mine himself also seemed to sense the fact that a master's hand was on the reins, and he at once began dancing. The little jockey seemed to fill the horse with a new fire even before he had put him to his best pace. He was able to lower Halsey's showing for the half mile by three seconds, and they were well pleased with the first real test of speed.

After they had mastered the half mile

they tried three quarters and then a mile and finally a mile and an eighth, which was usually the distance of the great running races.

"There are three things that make a great running horse," said the jockey one day. "The start, the finish, and an ability to keep going at an even pace all the way, somewhere near to his best clip. He must not be allowed to lag, or the spurt at the finish will not count."

The little jockey made many suggestions as to the care and feed of Palo'mine. Whenever Halsey and he went for a long hard workout, the horse had to have especial attention. He must be sponged off carefully from head to foot, especial care being taken to get out all the saddle marks. If it was dusty his nostrils must also be sponged out. His feet must be watched continually and the dirt and other foreign particles scraped out each day. There must be no chances taken with thrush, or blisters, or any other foot trouble. Brushing and currying Halsey had always attended to, but he now put in extra work in that particular.

"Keep his coat clean, and it will keep him on his mettle," said McBride.

"Keep his stable perfectly clean, don't let him stand in anything wet, for it is bad for the feet."

"Above all things always keep up the love between you, for a good horse will do more for those he loves than for those to whom he is indifferent. If it really came to a pinch he would do more for you than for me, this very minute. A good horse's love is worth cultivating."

Thus it was with hard study and much spare time put in with the training of Palo'mine that the happy weeks and months fairly flew.

Almost before they realized it Halsey and Palo'mine were home for the Christmas vacation. That was a happy and never to be forgotten week. One that all remembered afterwards with gratitude.

All too quickly it passed and they were back again at college and the training of the racer. So fast the months flew that it was Easter before it had seemed that another

week had passed and Halsey and his chum were on the road again going back to Eaton Manor.

But after arriving at the old Manor house the boy was at once struck by the sense of gloom and quiet that overhung the place. He even felt when he first galloped into the yard that something had gone wrong.

Margaret greeted him with her usual cordiality, which included a kiss, but he saw at once from her face that something was the matter.

"What is it, sis?" asked the boy.

"You will know soon enough. It has broken Uncle Hillery all up and Aunt Julia too. You know Eaton Manor has been in the family so long."

Halsey asked no more questions but followed Peggy into the house wondering what strange disaster had overtaken them.

He was surprised to see how harassed his uncle looked. It seemed to him that he had aged five years since he saw him last. Aunt Julia also was depressed and very grave in her manner.

"What is the matter, uncle? I hope it isn't as bad as your looks would indicate."

"It is bad enough, my boy. I have kept it from you and Margaret as long as I can, but it has been coming on for years.

"You see, I am not a good business man. I was not brought up in that way. I have always had plenty of money and thought it would come in some way so I have not looked out for the dollars as I should have. You see, Halsey, I am badly involved. I am afraid that Eaton Manor must be sold. In fact the sheriff's warrant has already been served upon me."

Halsey sat down in the nearest chair and looked at his uncle in amazement. He had always supposed his uncle to be rich and now here he was confessing to him that they were to be sold out of house and home. It was incredible.

"I don't wonder that you are surprised," said his uncle. "It will be a surprise to the entire Blue Grass country. Nearly every one has supposed me rich. I really ought to be."

"Well, uncle, one thing that has made you poor was the fact that you freed all of your slaves and have been paying them wages for the past five years," said Margaret loyally.

"No," replied uncle Hillery. "It isn't that alone, although that helped. I am a poor business man. I let money slip through my fingers. I am too free handed. I like to entertain too well. Then I always lend to a friend if I have a dollar. I have a lot of bad debts."

"Well, that ends my college days," said Halsey.

"No, it doesn't," replied his uncle stoutly. "Your aunt and I have a little money that will not be involved and we want to see you through. We shall insist upon that."

Halsey said nothing, but he determined that they should not make any further sacrifices in his behalf. He would give up college.

That evening he went to the stable to tell the bad news to Palo'mine. He wanted to be alone and think it over. He discovered

to his surprise that many of the horses were missing from the stable. They had been sold. Also there were few negroes about. It certainly looked desolate.

He sat for a long time by Palo'mine's side thinking. They must not give up Eaton Manor. It meant so much to his uncle and aunt and besides he had never known himself how he loved the old place until that hour.

The great rambling house, with its many ells, and piazzas. The shady yard, the broad fertile fields, the green pastures with the pleasant woods, the great barns and the tobacco sheds; even the white turnpike. He loved that also. Why, he loved every inch of the old place. No, it must not be sold. It should not be. He would stop it in some way. Why, all his dreams for the future were centered about Eaton Manor. There would be no use of going to college and making a career for himself if there was not the final goal of coming back to Eaton Manor. Why, it was like sailing away

upon a long journey, with no home port to return to. It was unspeakable. He would stop it. But how?

For another half hour he sat there thinking. His brows knit in deep thought. Then finally he got up with a shout and went to Palo'mine's side. He put his arms about the horse's neck and laid his face against his cheek.

"Yes, old Pal, we will stop it. You and I together. We will win back Eaton Manor, or break in the attempt."

With that pleasant prospect in mind, the boy went back into the house to try and cheer up the rest of the family. They must remain in the dark for the present. No one could be told of his project.

CHAPTER VI

THE RACE

IT was with a heavy heart that Halsey finally mounted Palo'mine and started back to college at Lexington. He had been in doubt whether to go back or not. But his uncle and aunt had insisted that what money it would cost to put him through the remaining two months of the college year would be but a drop in the bucket. He might as well have the benefit of the two additional months.

"If we are going to smash, we will, and a few hundred dollars more or less won't break me any quicker," his uncle Hillery had said.

So Halsey had finally consented to go back. But the greatest consideration, that which had really sent him back, his uncle and aunt knew nothing of. It was so wild

a dream that he hardly dared to own it to himself. But the courageous young man had a plan for getting a part of the money which his good uncle so sorely needed. At least he was going to make a try for it.

As soon as he was back in Lexington he went at once to Jock McBride and told him his plan.

"You see, Mr. McBride," he finished, "my uncle is down and out and I must save him. I think Palo'mine can win good money, even if he cannot take first in the sweepstake. I will work day and night. Won't you help us? We need your help so much."

"I am afraid you don't realize what this great sweepstake race is," replied the jockey. "You see all the great racers in America are in it. Why, old Red Bird himself has won it for three years, and he holds the world's running record. But he is not the only great running horse that will be entered. Flying Cloud is nearly as good. The stables at Louisville have also promised to put in a couple more horses who will make Red Bird look to his laurels. Some of the

best jockeys in the country will ride. It is not always the horse, but the man on the horse counts as well. Do you think we can take a green horse and a green driver and win out with all these seasoned horses and jockeys?"

"I don't know, but I do know I want to try. We can not do any worse than get beaten. That won't kill us. Won't you help? We need the money so badly."

McBride was a good fellow and he had a large heart in his breast. He was deeply touched by the story of Colonel Eaton's financial embarrassment. He had known the Eaton family for several years.

There was no kinder-hearted gentleman in Kentucky than Hillery Eaton. If he could do anything to help he ought to. Besides, he hated to disappoint the boy. So he finally announced his decision.

"I tell you what I will do," he said one morning after Halsey had been dinning away at him for several days. "I will undertake it if you will put all thoughts of money out of your head. Then if we fail

you won't be heartbroken. I tell you frankly that there isn't a ghost of a chance, but I will help you and we will enter your horse. We won't expect anything, so if we win anything that will be all to the good."

So it was with this forlorn hope that Halsey and Palo'mine began the really hard work of preparing for the great Sweepstake Race which was to be held in May.

"You must do a thousand miles under certain conditions besides all the track work," said McBride the morning that he gave in.

Halsey was nonplussed at this announcement, but promised. So early and late they worked, getting Palo'mine reduced to the last ounce of flesh.

"He must be all bone and muscle," said McBride. "You also must be fifteen pounds lighter. Even then you will be thirty pounds heavier than most of the jockeys and that is a handicap."

Halsey had thought he knew what hard riding was but McBride disillusionized him. Every hour that he could get outside college work was spent in the saddle. He was in

the saddle before daybreak and often until midnight. At night after these long rides in the open he would fall like a log into bed and did not awake until he was aroused by his roommate in the early dawn.

Not only did he have to put in these grilling long-ride stunts, but also they had to work so many hours a day on the Lexington Jockey Club track, which was one of the fastest in the country. They had to begin all over learning the race. The start, the finish, the race as a whole. How to ride the different stretches. How to save the horse as well as one could for the finish. In all the tricks of the trade McBride carefully schooled Halsey.

The boy worked as he had never worked before and Palo'mine worked as he had never done before. It all counted and McBride himself was surprised at the results.

Finally one day when he had held the watch himself and they had done the whole mile and an eighth in three seconds better than they had ever done before, McBride at last became enthusiastic. This was very ex-

ceptional for him. He was a Scotchman and not given to talk.

"My godfrey, boy. I don't know but what we have got a racer after all! He really did something on that last quarter that was worthy of old Red Bird himself. Come up close, I want to whisper the time in your ear. It will surprise you. I don't want any one to hear."

The words were barely out of his mouth when a dark little man came running up. He seemed very much excited.

"McBride," he cried. "Whose horse is that? What is his name? I took his time meself. Perhaps I made a mistake. But it sure looked good."

To Halsey's surprise Jock would say nothing about the time, and finally the man went away after examining Palo'mine carefully. McBride seemed silent, and would say little about the stranger.

Finally in answer to Halsey's repeated questions as to who he was he said, "Why he is one of the best jockeys in Kentucky and the most unscrupulous. His name is

Dan O'Brien. He never stops at anything in my opinion. But we have never caught him at any crooked business, so he can't be fired. But he is a bad one. I am afraid of him. I am very sorry that he saw your horse run to-day. He is to drive Flying Cloud. You keep a sharp lookout on your horse. Look to his feed and his feet. Of course we won't expect anything bad, but we will keep our eyes open. There are some large bets up on Flying Cloud. Some are even backing him against Red Bird. So we must look after our horse. But don't worry about it, boy. Everything will probably be all right. Perhaps I ought not to have said anything about O'Brien."

But Halsey did not forget and he watched Palo'mine as he would have his uncle's safe. The burst of speed that Palo'mine had shown in that last test had put a great hope in the boy's heart. Perhaps fate was going to be kind to them. That night he opened his Bible before going to sleep and by chance opened at the story of David and Goliath. Perhaps this race would prove another sur-

prise to the Philistines. He hoped so. So with this new hope in his heart the boy went to bed and slept more peacefully than he had for days.

Halsey thought very little about Dan O'Brien and his curiosity about Palo'mine and his time, after a day or two. At first he was a bit worried about the sinister looking Irishman, but as Jock McBride did not seem to worry he took his cue from him.

But one evening about a week later he was riding into the driveway leading to the stable when Palo'mine's hoof struck a small, square block of wood lying immediately in his path. There was something about the innocent wood that caused Halsey to dismount and pick it up. To his surprise he saw that it had a long savage nail driven in the middle of it with about two inches sticking out. The boy looked at it for several minutes before the full significance of this bit of wood came to him. This was after he had placed it on the ground with the nail up, where it had a savage appearance.

"Gracious, Palo'mine," he said at last,

"if you had planted your hoof fairly upon that it might have lamed you for a month."

As a precautionary measure Halsey walked ahead of the horse and found three more of these savage blocks in the driveway before reaching the stable door.

"The miserable scoundrel," he cried, gathering them all up in his hands.

How any human being, especially one who handled and drove horses, could stoop to such dastardly meanness and cruelty was beyond his comprehension. But this was not all, for to his astonishment, Halsey found another block in the stall. The conspirator had sought to make sure that one of his missiles found the mark.

Halsey hardly dared leave Palo'mine, but Jock McBride had to be told. So after feeding the horse the excited boy sought out McBride and showed him the blocks.

"I guess that is O'Brien's work all right," he said finally looking very grave. "We have got to watch our horse carefully. Dan evidently considers him dangerous. But don't worry. I guess he won't try anything

more seeing this failed." But McBride himself was not at all sure what the unscrupulous jockey's next move might be.

All went well for several days and the race was only a week away. One night Halsey had gone into the loft of the stable to get Palo'mine a wisp of hay. He was being fed very little hay, but the boy thought he ought to have a handful. He was just stooping over to drop it down through the tunnel leading to the manger below when he noticed a hand reaching into the manger. It was thrust into the manger quickly and then withdrawn. But it had time in which to drop before the horse what looked like pieces of carrot.

"Back, Palo'mine," cried Halsey, imperatively.

The faithful horse immediately backed to the length of his halter chain, and Halsey thought he heard the sound of scurrying feet.

"Whoa, Palo'mine," was Halsey's next order. He felt sure that the horse would

stand where he was until he could reach the stable. He went down the stairs two steps at a time and fairly ran into the stable. Yes, the mysterious hand had left several generous pieces of carrot in the manger, but what had been the object? Palo'mine was very fond of carrots, but there was no one who had ever fed him carrots before.

Then a dark thought flashed into Halsey's mind. Was some one trying to poison Palo'mine? At the thought his blood fairly boiled. But he would wait and see. He would not be suspicious until there was good ground for suspicion.

An hour later when he showed McBride the pieces of carrot, the jockey broke open one of them and they discovered it contained a fine, white powder.

"What's that?" cried Halsey, excitedly.

"Arsenic," replied the jockey, gravely.

So after that either Halsey himself, or a trusted college chum kept watch over the horse.

One afternoon just as he had returned

from the track to the stable Halsey was rather astonished to receive a summons by letter from the President of the college to come at once to his office. The letter was handed to him by a small boy who quickly disappeared. The young man turned the letter over and over and read it several times. It looked genuine. It was written on the college stationery. But what could the President want of him? Finally he put the letter in his pocket and decided to go to the office as soon as he had fed Palo'mine. Fortunately his college friend came around to the stable just before he left so he could leave the chum in charge.

Halsey was a bit taken back when the President informed him that he had not sent for him. When the boy showed him the letter he said it was a fake. Probably a joke of some of his college friends. Halsey excused himself and at once took the letter to McBride.

“Just another ruse to get at your horse. They thought you would leave him alone. You had better have a cot moved into the

stable and sleep there until after the race. I guess they won't try anything more. Three times and out."

So Halsey moved into the stable and slept by the side of his beloved Palo'mine and they became better chums than ever, if possible.

Probably the most exciting and magnificent spectacle in the annals of running races for all time, anywhere in the whole world, is the great Kentucky sweepstake of which I write. It even eclipses the famous English Derbys. It is the talk of horsemen throughout the Middle West for weeks before the stirring event. Rarely do a group of equine lovers gather for a horse chat, but they tell of great races they have seen in the Blue Grass Sweepstake.

The purse is always large, twenty-five thousand dollars usually, and the bets are as large as the purses and credit of the betters will permit of. This is a free and easy country, and a good horseman must back his favorite horse, even if he has to pawn his coat.

The horses run in these great races are famous descendants of the most beautiful and fleet Arabic and Bard strains. From time to time the stock is improved by the importation of a famous stallion, the policy being to produce the best running horses in the whole world. Most of the records for running races have been kept in America.

For several days before the race the Kentucky turnpikes were thronged with travelers, all going to Lexington, the Mecca of horse breeders and the scene of the great sweepstake. These parties were on horseback, or in carriages and buggies, while many journeyed in ox carts, or on foot. Several days of dusty travel and fatigue were nothing, when weighed in the balance with this thrilling event. For two days before the race each train coming into Lexington brought its load of visitors. Then the city took on a gala appearance and the accommodations were taxed to their utmost.

Five thousand of the country's best horse breeders, trainers, and jockeys were usually

in attendance, and the entire crowd often reached fifty thousand.

The great race was held just outside the city on the track of the Lexington Jockey Club, a famous kite shaped track, which has seen most of the world's trotting and running records smashed. The track was kite shaped because that gave a straight-away stretch for both the start and the finish.

The great grandstand, seating ten thousand people, was situated at the point, so that offered a fine view of most of the race, while the bleachers for the rest of the fifty thousand were arranged along the sides of each leg. But most of the spectators were possessed of field glasses so the entire race could be plainly seen.

As the day which was to mean so much to Halsey and Palo'mine approached, the boy became so excited that he could hardly sleep or eat. But McBride admonished him not to expect anything in the way of money from the race.

College had to be given up for a few days and Halsey and the trainer put in all their

time perfecting Palo'mine. Nor was McBride disappointed. The day before the race when they tried him out the fine horse even astonished McBride, but just what time he made for the half mile McBride would not tell the boy.

"He may not do as well in the race," said the trainer, "and we don't want to be disappointed."

"Yes, he will do better," replied Halsey confidently. "He is going to surprise even you. I have been talking to Palo'mine for days. I have told him over and over how much it means to Uncle and me. Perhaps you think he doesn't understand. Well, maybe he doesn't just understand my words, but when I get upon his back the day of the race, I know he will feel that I want him to run to the last drop of blood in his veins and he will do it, too. He will get the thought from me. I tell you, Mr. McBride, there is a wonderful understanding between us."

McBride said nothing, but he was really impressed with the enthusiasm of the boy.

At last the eventful day dawned. It was

a perfect May day with blue skies and a balmy air. Perhaps not quite as ideal for a race as Autumn, but still a great day.

The crowd began to gather at the grand stand several hours before the race, which was for three in the afternoon. Some of the jockeys were trying out their horses for the last time on the track and the crowd wished to see them go. They also liked to talk horse and make predictions on the race.

Red Bird was the favorite and Flying Cloud the next best. Flying Cloud was even backed against Red Bird at three to two. Flying Cloud was also freely backed against the rest of the field at three to one.

Palo'mine was entered as King Crescent, because of the crescent in his forehead. Halsey had not wanted to use his real name as he feared the folks at home might get wind of his plans. No one had ever heard of King Crescent.

There were six horses in the race; Stardust, Golden Rod, and Nighthawk being the other three.

Halsey had not imagined Kentucky con-

tained so many people as swarmed the streets of Lexington on that famous forenoon. They started for the race track two hours before the race was scheduled to begin and by noon twenty-five thousand had assembled. By two o'clock nearly every seat was taken, and thousands were standing.

As a preliminary to the great race there was a horseback tournament. A bit of old-time exhibition of riding and skill with the lance. Fifteen rings were placed upon a pole and each rider rode by at a gallop and sought to pick a ring from the pole with his lance. The one who picked off the most in fifteen trials was declared the winner of the tournament. The victor then rode up before the grandstand and called for the lady of his choice to come forth and be crowned with the wreath of flowers which he had won. It was a pleasing bit of fun, and just the right prelude for the great race.

Halsey and Palo'mine and the other riders and horses did not appear until the signal was given for the race. They were

closeted with the trainers in some stables nearby, putting the last touches to the horses and getting their last instructions.

"Don't be nervous, if you can help it," McBride had said. "Don't expect any money. Be sure and don't spare the quirt at the start. You must get away like a flash. Don't let him lag. Keep as well up to the front as you can and not blow him. And finish for all there is in you. I will be in the grand stand, watching. Don't get into a pocket if you can help it. Use your head and I am sure that old Palo'mine will do the rest."

"All right, Mr. McBride. We will do our best," replied Halsey.

When he finally rode forth upon the track there was such a sea of faces gazing at him that it made him fairly dizzy. Every one seemed to be looking directly at him and at Palo'mine. But they were probably not looking at them any more than at any of the other horses.

There was a great ovation as old Red Bird took his place under the wire. Flying

Cloud also was greeted warmly. But there was not a ripple for King Crescent.

Finally the six beautiful horses were drawn up abreast, for it was a standing start. The pistol cracked and they were off.

Six such beautiful horses had rarely been seen on a Kentucky track, as these madly racing thoroughbreds. Red Bird was a bright bay with black points and black mane and tail. He was beautifully groomed and his coat shone as though it had been varnished. White Cloud was a clean-cut white, of the Arabic type, with very slender legs and dainty hoofs. Breeding spoke in his every movement. Stardust was a black, more on the Morgan, or pony build, but nevertheless he could run like the wind. Golden Rod was a red roan, tall and rangy and very fiery. The groom had to hold him while the driver mounted. Nighthawk was a dapple gray, very full-chested, with easy motions. While our old friend Palo'mine was a dark, rich chestnut, with a white crescent in his forehead.

The six quirts had descended as one whip

and each horse had struck his full stride in less than a hundred feet. Red Bird had made good his reputation as a great racer by a wonderful quick getaway that had put him two lengths in the lead without any seeming effort. White Cloud was next, two lengths behind, and the rest were rather closely bunched, with Palo'mine bringing up the rear.

Halsey felt the rush of wind in his face and heard it singing in his ears and the sound of many pounding hoofs like the charge of cavalry. The pace fairly took his breath away, but after a little his nerves steadied and he began working his horse forward.

Relatively, the flying horses who were making twenty feet at a stride, seemed to stand still, or just move. For Palo'mine's nose was just at Nighthawk's gray flank. Then it moved forward to his saddle girth, then to his withers, and at last he was nose to nose with the gray racer. Stardust was next in the procession that had now surung out a bit, and Halsey and Palo'mine went

after him. Soon Palo'mine's nose was up to the roan runner's flank, and Halsey came abreast of his rump, and then his shoulder, and finally the two horses were running neck to neck. They held this position up to the quarter and then Palo'mine drew ahead.

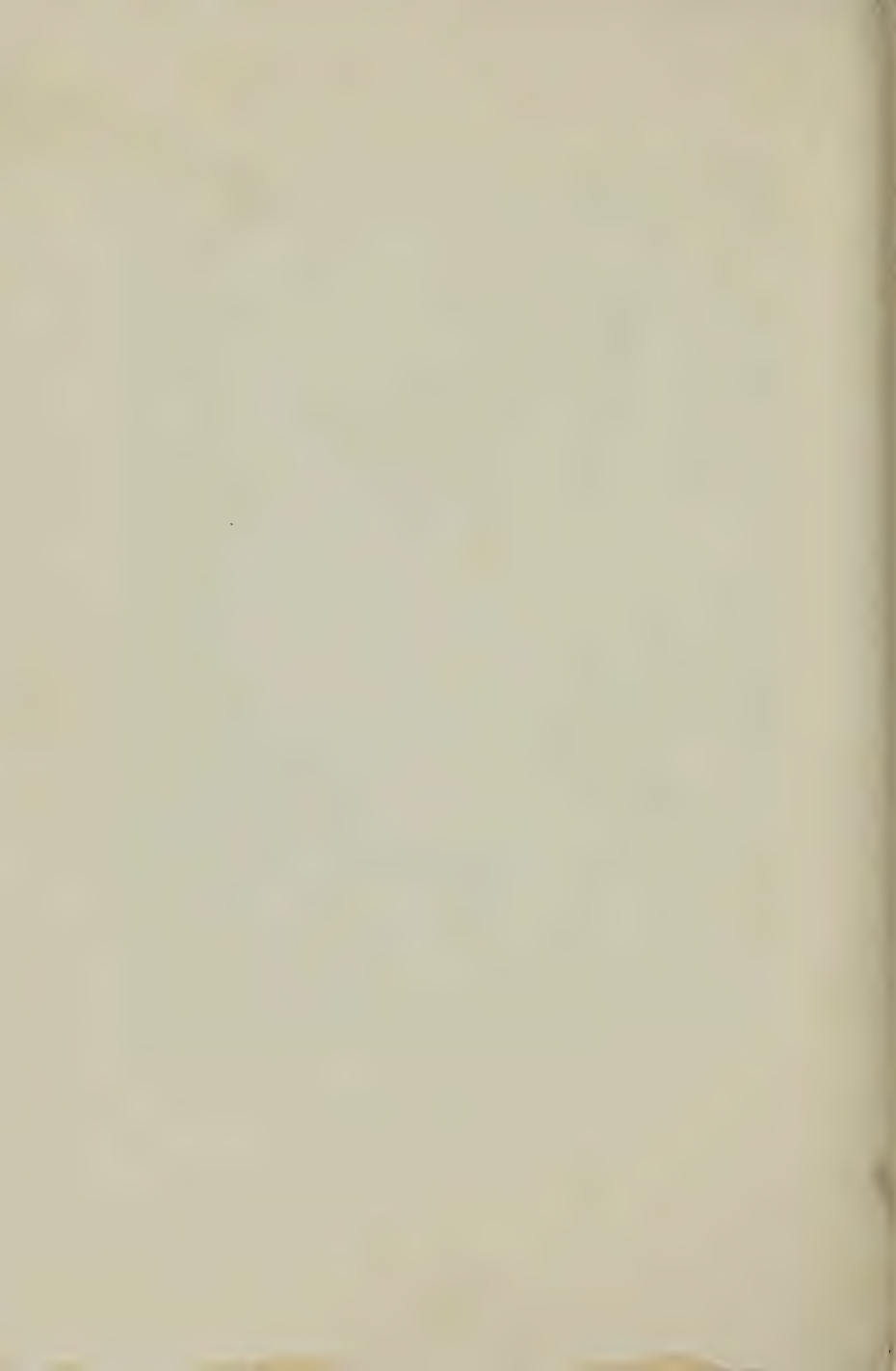
There were now three horses ahead of Halsey and his beloved Palo'mine; Red Bird four lengths, White Cloud two lengths and Golden Rod one length.

McBride was watching eagerly from his position in the grand stand and was much pleased with their showing. But the crowd thought Red Bird a sure winner. He had taken the lead so easily and seemed not to be over-exerting himself in holding it. But the full pace of the race had not yet been struck.

It was one thing to pass Nighthawk and Stardust, but quite another to pass Golden Rod. Up to this point Halsey had not urged Palo'mine, but he knew his mettle, and felt that he was good for more speed without blowing him, so he gave him the quirt.



Halsey felt the rush of wind in his face
and heard it singing in his ears.



McBride noted his move from the grand stand and applauded.

"That's the stuff, boy," he cried, "go after them. You have got a game horse and he is going to show them a thing or two or my name isn't Jock McBride."

Foot by foot Palo'mine drew alongside Golden Rod, yet it was a hard struggle. But he was even up at the half and soon drew ahead after that important post had been passed.

"That's the boy," cried McBride. "Go after White Cloud. Give that durned Dan O'Brien what is coming to him." But this was easier said than done as McBride knew full well. It had been one thing to work up into third position, but to gain upon the two leaders was quite another.

As Palo'mine's nose drew up to Flying Cloud's white flank O'Brien looked back over his shoulder at Halsey with a malevolent grin, which also had a look of fear. He had not suspected that he was so close. So he gave his splendid horse the quirt. But Palo'mine held his position, with Halsey's

having to use his own quirt for another eighth of a mile, up to the five-eighths mark. Then Halsey called upon Palo'mine for another burst of speed. He leaned well forward on the horse's neck and struck him twice, not hard, but he communicated something to the horse from his own body, or mind, which was not in the blows. He called to Palo'mine with his master's will. The splendid horse felt his master's call for more speed, and immediately his nose came forward even with O'Brien's saddle.

The Jockey again looked back at Halsey, and with a sudden sideward movement of his quirt struck Palo'mine across the face. He did it so cleverly that the crowd thought he had intended to strike his own horse, but Halsey knew better and his blood boiled, yet he would fight fair. So he pulled Palo'mine a little to one side in which effort he lost the half length which he had gained, but it was soon regained and another half length with it, so they were running neck to neck at the three-quarters post.

By this time McBride was fairly jumping up and down in his seat.

“Good boy,” he cried. “Now show him your heels. Push him, boy, push him. Palo’mine is iron. Push him. Give him the quirt.”

Halsey of course did not hear this advice. He did not hear anything from the crowd. He only heard the singing wind in his ears, and the pounding hoofs, and the labored breathing of the straining thoroughbreds.

Once again he leaned forward close to Palo’mine’s neck, that his frantically racing horse might the better feel the urge of his body and called upon him for more speed, at the same time striking him lightly with the quirt. Yes, Palo’mine had more speed in him. Halsey had known it all the time, and he had still more, but Halsey was saving that for old Red Bird, and the last eighth of a mile. Everything depended upon the home stretch.

Inch by inch and foot by foot they drew

ahead of Flying Cloud, and at the end of the mile were only a length behind Red Bird. The crowd were now intense with excitement. The men were most of them standing. Some were shouting, but most were too excited to shout. Women were waving handkerchiefs and parasols. The excitement was intense. But of all this Halsey and Palo'mine were unconscious.

They were almost in a world of their own. In it was just a flying blurred landscape. A sea of blurred faces, a ribbon of brown track before and old Red Bird just ahead of them. To Halsey's dismay Red Bird's rider gave him the quirt at the mile and put forth his every ounce of strength and skill to pull ahead of the dark horse who had come up to such dangerous quarters.

But Halsey also again called to Palo'mine. This time he did not spare the quirt but let it fall heavily. Each blow hurt him more than it did Palo'mine. But they must win. Eaton Manor was at stake. It seemed to Halsey that it was almost impossible to gain upon the leader. The eighth was go-

ing. They were rushing towards the wire like a whirlwind. In another few seconds he would have lost the race.

With a mighty effort into which he put all his will power he again called to Palo'mine, and to his great joy Palo'mine's nose came up to Red Bird's saddle girth. It then reached his shoulder and then they were neck to neck. But it seemed to Halsey that Red Bird was a foot or so ahead. The wire was only about a hundred feet away.

Once again his quirt descended and he called to Palo'mine with the agonized cry of his soul. Into it he put all the longing of his young life; his hope for Eaton Manor. If he had shouted, the sound would have been as a whisper compared with thunder to this cry of the boy's soul for all he loved.

And Palo'mine, brave old Palo'mine, heard and answered. With a thunder of hoofs and a rush of wind, they swept under the wire. But as he glanced sideways at Red Bird, Halsey's heart sank, as he seemed to be a few inches ahead.

Then the bright world grew dark and Hal-

sey felt a queer sensation coming over him. He was faint and sick and weak, so he slipped to the ground, holding on to the pommel of his saddle. The next thing he remembered Jock McBride was hauling him to his feet and shouting something in his ear. He was so dazed and confused he could not hear what he was saying.

The crowd had gone mad. They were shouting something with a sound like the roar of the sea, but Halsey could not make out what it was. Then his brain cleared and the import of the mighty sound came to his consciousness.

"King Crescent. King Crescent." They were roaring. "King Crescent wins."

"McBride, who is King Crescent?" asked Halsey in a daze, bewildered still.

"King Crescent! Why it's your own horse, old Palo'mine. You won by half a nose, boy. It is the greatest race ever seen in Kentucky."

CHAPTER VII

EATON MANOR IS SAVED

ALTHOUGH Halsey and Palo'mine had won twenty-five thousand dollars in the Great Sweepstake race, yet Eaton Manor had not been wholly redeemed, but the way for its ultimate redemption had been made.

Colonel Eaton had told Halsey that he owed forty-five thousand dollars and if he had twenty-five thousand of his own to apply on the debts he could probably raise the balance. This was why Halsey had striven so desperately for the great prize.

So although they were not wholly out of the woods yet, Halsey felt very jubilant as he led Palo'mine off the track.

When they had gone upon the track no one had hailed them. They had been practically unknown, but now a score of jockeys and horse fanciers crowded about them. They were the admired of all admirers.

Hundreds of horsemen were anxious to get a closer view of the wonderful chestnut who had passed under the wire just half a nose ahead of old Red Bird.

Halsey himself had been hoping for weeks that he would win the race. Something that was wiser than he had told him that he would. But what a desperate struggle it would be he had not even dreamed. He also had expected that something else might turn up which would give him the opportunity to free his uncle's estate. Uncle Hillery had done so much for him that he wanted to repay the debt.

But although he had prayed for deliverance from the menace that threatened them, yet he was not prepared for the form that deliverance should take. Nor was he prepared for the great sacrifice that he was to be called upon to make, before Eaton Manor should be wholly free.

As the crowd that had thronged about them finally gave way for them to go to the stable, a fine old gentleman came up and addressed McBride.

"Hello, Jock McBride. I want to congratulate you and I want to congratulate your driver. It was the most superb race I have ever seen and I have seen them all for thirty years. I also want to know the owner of this horse. He has won my heart."

"This is my friend Halsey Eaton, Colonel Eaton's nephew. Colonel Eaton of Eaton Manor, you know him."

"Surely. We all know the Colonel. There is not a finer gentleman in Kentucky. So you are Colonel Eaton's nephew—I am glad to meet you—and this is one of Colonel Eaton's famous Sultan colts. I might have known. Who owns him?"

"He is mine," spoke up Halsey quickly, a great pride swelling in his heart. "He has been mine ever since he was a month old. He is my comrade," and Halsey put his arm over Palo'mine's neck affectionately and smoothed his nose.

"Well, well," said the old gentleman, looking at Palo'mine narrowly. "You wouldn't sell him, would you, young man? I would give you a lot of money for him."

At the word Halsey drew back as though the benevolent old gentleman had struck him a blow in the face. Then he thought he must have heard wrong, so he stammered:

"Sell him, did you say? Sell Palo'mine?"

"Why yes," laughed Major Huxley, who owned one of the best stables in Lexington, "Why yes, sell him. Men have done such things before. But I can well understand that the idea shocks you. Of course you love him if he has been your pal ever since he was a month old."

"Yes he has," cried Halsey. "That is his real name, Palo'mine. We called him King Crescent just for the race."

"Humm, yes, I see," said the old gentleman reflectively. "So he is your pal. Well, I hate to make the suggestion, but he has taken my fancy. I want him bad. What would you say to twenty thousand dollars for him? Twenty thousand in cold cash?"

Halsey groaned. This was just the sum that uncle Hillery needed to free Eaton

Manor. To make it wholly free, and his uncle's own, just as Halsey had always supposed it was.

Uncle Hillery who had done so much for him was in trouble. He remembered with a strange tugging at his heart-strings how anxious and worn he had looked at Easter. He had aged ten years since he had seen him the Christmas before. Could he not make this sacrifice for his dear uncle?

Palo'mine moved over close to Halsey and put his nose against the young man's cheek. He was kissing him. It was a trick he had taught him.

"For God's sake, Palo'mine, don't," choked the boy. "I can't sell you when you are kissing me." He pushed the beautiful horse's nose away. But the soft nose went prospecting in the boy's pocket. It seemed to Halsey that he would pull his very heart from under his coat. So he pushed him gently away.

"Whoa, stand still," said Halsey, holding Palo'mine at arm's length.

"McBride," said the boy hoarsely, "Can

I do it? He is my chum. But you know about Eaton Manor. I suppose I ought to make the sacrifice."

"It is a good offer," said McBride. "I would take it myself."

Then Halsey summoned all his fighting spirit, the spirit that had won the great race, and made the greatest effort of his young life. For he placed the bridle rein in the Major's hand and said quietly "He is yours, Major. Be good to him. He is my comrade. My need is very great. I would not sell him for any consideration which was to benefit myself. But it is my uncle. He has been very good to me. He is the only father I ever knew. He is in great need of money. So I sell my pal."

"Good," cried the Major. "Spoken like a man. You have acted wisely, young man. I appreciate your struggle. I will be good to him. He will have the best of everything, including a horseman's love." So with a mist of tears in his eyes, Halsey stood dazedly on the track and saw Palo'mine

led away. He had passed out of his life. He was the property of another.

"Never mind, boy," said McBride kindly. "There are other horses in the world."

"That may be," said Halsey thickly, "but there are no other Palo'mines. You see the Major at the bank and fix it all up for me. I can't. I might back out. You have him deposit the money in the bank in my uncle's name. He said we were to meet him in an hour."

"All right," said McBride, "but don't take it so hard."

"I can't help it," returned Halsey, "I have got to get out of this and fight it out with myself. I am going to take to the woods, Jock. You attend to it for me."

"All right. I will attend to everything. But you had better go to your room and rest," answered McBride.

"I am going to the woods to rest. It is the best place I know of," said the boy wearily. "I am tired out. The race was a terrific strain. I will be all right in a

little while. Good bye for the rest of the day. I will come around to the stable to-morrow."

So McBride went to the bank to attend to the rest of the transaction, while Halsey took his grief to the woods.

The friendly green woods, which has so often opened its soothing arms to the bruised and broken-hearted sons of men. The woods which wraps its green mantle about one and bids the tired spirit rest. The woods where Mother Nature applies that gentle balm which she alone knows how to administer. Many a tired or broken heart has found surcease from pain and sorrow in the woods, so it was to this natural sanctuary from trouble that poor Halsey fled with his boyish grief.

Although the streets were thronged with the great crowd returning from the race track, and although he was crowded and jostled on every side, yet the young man saw them not. He seemed to himself to be in a strange, bad dream. He could not shake off the impression that the race and the sale

of Palo'mine had all been a nightmare, and that he would presently awake and find himself in the college dormitory.

Two or three miles from the city on one of the principal boulevards was a beautiful estate. Close to the road behind the great house was a wonderful oak grove, interspersed with small pines. The green moss carpet under the great trees was generously sprinkled with ferns. Halsey had often gazed into the cool depths when riding by with Palo'mine. He did not know to whom it belonged, or if he would be welcome in the grove. But it was the nearest woods that he knew of so he now bent his steps hither.

Arrived at the grove he plunged into its friendly shade. He did not stop until he was fifty rods from the road. Here he found a cool spot in a little grotto and flung himself wearily upon the moss carpet. For a long time he lay there thinking, and finally he buried his face in the green moss and gave way to his pent-up emotions.

He was nearly man grown, and a good fighter who did not give up easily, yet part-

ing with Palo'mine had been the last straw. The strain of the race had been terrific. So much had been at stake. He had done his best. He had sacrificed the best thing he had in the whole world, so now he had to go back to Mother Nature to rest.

He did not know how long he lay there thinking and struggling with himself. He must be a man and not a child. He must put on a brave front. No one at home must know what it had cost him. So he determined to fight it to the finish and get the best of himself.

He was so engaged in his great struggle for mastery that he did not hear a light foot-fall on the soft moss carpet, or know any one was about until a friendly, kindly woman's voice spoke almost in his ear.

"Why my boy, what is the matter? Are you injured? Are you hurt much?"

Halsey raised up quickly, shame and disgust at being caught in this weakness overpowering him. He did not have time to wipe away the traces of his grief, so he was caught fairly, just as though he had been a

small boy. He was at first almost too ashamed to speak.

A kind-looking, motherly woman of perhaps fifty was bending over him. She was simply gowned in a white dress. She wore no hat. Upon her arm was a market basket and in her hand was a trowel. The basket was partly filled with wild flowers and ferns.

"Oh, no ma'am, I am not hurt, that is, not much. I mean I am not injured. I am just disappointed. I had to fight out something. Something that troubled me. So I came here to this beautiful woods. Am I trespassing? Is it your woods, ma'am?"

"Yes, it is my woods, but you are not trespassing. I am glad if it looks good to you. I often come here to rest myself." She laid her hands gently upon Halsey's shoulder.

"I had a boy once," she said tenderly, "he would have been about your age if he had lived. I lost him when he was ten."

"I am sorry you lost your boy," replied

Halsey. "My mother would have been about as old as you are if she had lived."

"That makes us friends," said the woman, sitting down upon a knoll beside the young man, "I have lost my son and you have lost your mother. Now tell me what it is that troubles you. It often helps to tell such things. Perhaps it is something that can be mended."

"Oh no, it can't," replied Halsey. "It is something that I ought not to mind. I am a great booby to mind. But you see I brought him up. He was given to me when he was only a colt, a month old."

"I thought it was something to do with a horse when I first saw your jockey suit. Tell me all about it," said the kind lady.

The woman looked so sympathetic and Halsey was so lonely just then that he did as she bade him and told her the long story of his boyhood and Palo'mine. He told it well, with all the enthusiasm of youth and with his grief welling up in his voice. When he had finished the kind woman gave his hand a warm motherly squeeze,

"You are a fine boy. I loved you the first moment I set eyes upon you and I like you better now. You have done a fine thing. You will get your reward. Here is something that you can always remember. A good deed like yours blesses those whom you strive to help but it also blesses you yourself a hundred fold. It will return to you magnified many times. That is the law of good. Don't forget that, my boy."

They talked for half an hour longer. Halsey told her of Eaton Manor and his uncle and aunt and Peggy. Finally when they at last parted he was much comforted.

Although Halsey went back to college with a determination to conquer his great sense of loss at being parted from Palo'mine yet the separation from his beloved saddle horse was too much for him. He could think of nothing else but that another hand was upon Palo'mine's bridle rein, and another man was in the saddle where he ought to be.

The new owner could not be expected to know all of Palo'mine's dainty ways, his

whims, his likes, and his dislikes. Who would feed him carrots, or apples now, or give him his lump of sugar? Who would smooth out his foretop and mane, and stroke his ears in the gentle way he loved?

If he was lonesome for Palo'mine, he knew the horse must be lonesome for him.

Each afternoon after studies Halsey would go for a long walk. He might have hired another saddle horse, but he did not feel he ever wanted to mount a horse again.

Then too, he had betrayed Palo'mine just after he had given his last ounce of strength and his last shred of devotion for his master. The sweat and the lather of the great race were still on his flanks. He had done all he could to save Eaton Manor. Then his master had sold him to a stranger, just like the Arab in the famous old poem. But he had not done it for himself. It had been for Uncle Hillery and those he loved. If it had been for himself he and Palo'mine would have starved together before he would have sold him.

He wondered if the new master was kind

to Palo'mine. Of course he was, only Palo'mine would miss his petting. He had made a chum of him and no one else would do that.

Halsey's life seemed so much out of joint and his interest in college so waned, that he was delighted beyond measure when he received a telegram from Uncle Hillery inviting him home for the week end.

"I have just heard of your great sacrifice," the telegram read, "You are a brave boy. I want to take you by the hand and thank you. Come home at once."

So Halsey hired another saddle horse and started for Eaton Manor. He had usually made the trip in two days with Palo'mine but the new horse took three days. When he at last galloped up to Eaton Manor it was with a great sense of homesickness. The old place had never looked so good. Well, he and Palo'mine had saved it. He had that to be glad of all the rest of his life. Uncle Hillery met him at the gate and aunt Julia and cousin Margaret were not far behind him.

"Welcome home, Halsey," cried Uncle Hillery. "You are a famous jockey and the bravest boy in Kentucky. I want to get my arms around you."

His uncle gave him a great bear hug before them all, and Aunt Julia kissed him primly, and Peggy shyly.

"Oh Halsey, why didn't you tell us about the race, so we could have seen it? It must have been thrilling. The papers are full of it. Your picture and Palo'mine's have gone all over the United States."

"It wouldn't have been so funny if I had been beaten," replied Halsey. "Jock McBride said we had not a ghost of a chance, so I kept pretty quiet."

"Well," said Uncle Hillery smiling in his old genial way, "you have gotten us out of the woods. Eaton Manor is safe. And we owe it all to you. To you and that horse."

"I always knew Kentucky Babe would foal a winner. She was a great mare. I say, Halsey," he continued, turning to his

nephew, "what would you say to a new horse all your own?"

"No, uncle," said Halsey, trying desperately not to show how hard he was hit, "no, I don't want any more horses at present. I may some time. But no other horse could take Palo'mine's place just now. He,—he,—I,—please don't say anything more about it now."

"Well, I won't," returned the Colonel. "But I just wish you would go out into the stable and see what is in Palo'mine's old stall."

Halsey was a good sport. It would spoil all of their joy over the recovery of Eaton Manor if they knew he felt so badly. So to please them and to get away and hide his emotions, he went out to the stable, to the place where he had so often gone on a run to greet Palo'mine.

As he opened the stable door he was greeted with a glad nicker. It was so much like Palo'mine's whinny that it made him start.

He was torn with conflicting emotions. He was half angry that another horse had so soon been put into Palo'mine's stall, but he was also curious about the new horse. So he went leisurely to the great roomy box stall, the best in the stable where Palo'mine had always been kept.

As he neared the stall the whinnying grew continuous and the horse began rattling his halter chain. An old trick of Palo'mine's. Tears filled the boy's eyes. He was so blinded that he almost ran into the intruder. But when he brushed away his tears he was standing by Palo'mine himself.

No, it was not he. The new horse was just like him. They were as like as two peas.

Yes, it was Palo'mine himself. There was no mistaking his great joy at seeing his master again.

"Oh Palo'mine, oh Palo'mine," cried the overjoyed boy rushing in beside his chum and putting his arms about his neck and laying his face against the horse's cheek.

"Am I not to lose you after all? Are you mine again?"

Palo'mine seemed to think he was and he rubbed his nose against his master's arm and nuzzled in his pocket for sugar.

Halsey could not wait another minute to know what it meant. He returned to the house running as though he had been a small boy instead of a tall young man.

"Uncle Hillery," he cried, almost before the door was open, "what does this mean? I sold Palo'mine. You have twenty thousand dollars in the Lexington bank which I received for him."

"It means," said Uncle Hillery, "that your brave deed touched the warm heart of a great horse lover. A man who could not let you make such a great sacrifice for a few thousand dollars. It means that your own good to others has returned upon your own head."

"Why, that is what the woman told me in the woods that it would do," said Halsey in wonderment.

"Exactly," said his uncle. "I am glad

you mentioned this woman. I was just coming to her myself. She is one of the finest gentle ladies in Kentucky. Do you know who she is?"

"No," said Halsey, "I didn't ask her name and she didn't tell me."

"Well," said his uncle, "she is Mrs. Major Huxley, the wife of the man to whom you sold Palo'mine. She went straight home and told him your story not an hour after you had told it to her."

"The Major was so touched that he at once got in communication with me and the result was that he returned Palo'mine and loaned me the twenty thousand which I needed. So Palo'mine is yours and Eaton Manor is saved as well."

Halsey was so overcome at the turn in events that he could not speak. He just stood and looked at them dumbly. Finally he turned and went back to the stable. A minute later they heard the sound of madly galloping hoofs. All hurried to the window.

They were just in time to see the world's

greatest running horse and Kentucky's best rider sweep by like the wind.

"He is just going to see that it is really true," chuckled Uncle Hillery. "My, but I am glad it came out in this way. I would almost rather have lost Eaton Manor than to have had him lose that horse. They are going to make a still greater name for themselves. I know it."

And he prophesied better than he knew. But in just what way they would distinguish themselves Colonel Eaton little dreamed.

CHAPTER VIII

TIMES THAT TRIED MEN'S SOULS

HALSEY and Palo'mine had won the great Kentucky Sweepstake in the first week of May 1860, and a few days later the Republican Convention at Chicago, on May 16, to be exact, nominated Abraham Lincoln to be their candidate for the Presidency of the United States.

Just what that may have had to do with the life of Halsey and Palo'mine may not at first appear, but it was a factor in their lives as we shall see later.

The political pot which had been simmering freely before the nomination of Lincoln, began to boil feverishly with that event. There were statesmen in Dixie who said openly that if he were elected the southern states would secede from the Union. But how much of this was just bluff and how

much true no one knew. Probably not even the prophets themselves.

But that summer and autumn witnessed one of the most bitter political campaigns this country ever saw. The scrap between Douglas and Lincoln had been growing in intensity for years, and this year saw it fought out to the finish.

It was really more than a political campaign for the great question of slavery was up before the American people for final settlement. For years abolitionists had been denouncing slavery in the north while the underground railroad railroaded the negroes northward as fast as possible. The people of Dixie were equally determined to keep their slaves at any cost. They had paid money for them. They were a legal part of their economical machinery. The United States had recognized slavery as legal in the early days of the country and so slavery must stand.

All this heated discussion in press and at red-hot political meetings Halsey heard, but it made little impression upon him. Uncle

Hillery was an optimist and he was not much of a politician. He thought the trouble would all blow over or be settled amicably so Halsey took his cue from him.

That summer of 1860 was spent much like its predecessors. He took long rides on Palo'mine and camped in the mountains. The rest of the time he spent pleasantly at Eaton Manor. In the autumn he went back to college. He was rather surprised to find that the political struggle had permeated college, where the students debated the questions freely and took very decided stands. The students from the eastern portion of the state were for the Union, while the Blue Grass section were more favorable to Dixie, and the keeping of the slaves.

This was a political condition which was to prevail all through the Civil War, making Kentucky a state partly divided against itself, and this fact gave rise to some of the most bitter local fighting.

In November to the surprise of most Kentuckians Lincoln was elected and the stage was set for the mighty civil struggle which

for four years rent the United States from end to end. But even then Colonel Eaton said it would blow over. War, civil war, was unthinkable.

So Halsey again took his cue from Uncle Hillery and went on with his studies just as though the great storm was not brewing. Yet he had begun to think for himself, and occasionally he was greatly troubled with certain aspects of the life about him and with the problems of his country.

True to the threat that had come out of the south some months earlier, South Carolina seceded from the Union in December, amid a great ringing of bells and much ceremony. In January five more states joined her. These were Florida, Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, and Louisiana. Texas followed in February. Virginia, the greatest of all the southern states and a recognized leader, did not secede until the fall of Fort Sumter.

There were fifty-five of the Virginia delegates who would not vote to secede even then, and this portion of the state was finally

set off as West Virginia, and admitted to the Union in 1863. In May, North Carolina, Arkansas and Tennessee also seceded. A temporary confederacy of the southern states had been formed in February and Jefferson Davis was subsequently elected president.

Then came President Lincoln's call on April 15th, 1861 for seventy-five thousand men and the great struggle was on.

When Halsey went home for a week-end in May he found Uncle Hillery very grave, but he would talk little. Halsey knew that his sympathy and interests were all for Dixie, but he did not seem willing to even influence his nephew. So Halsey went back to college very little enlightened as to the struggle.

To his surprise his college mates began slipping silently away. Where they went no one seemed to know. They were there to-day and to-morrow they were gone. But all felt very certain that they had gone to join the great army that General Lee and

Stonewall Jackson were raising for the confederacy.

Finally college was over and Halsey went home to Eaton Manor. Then began that terrible battle with himself, which was harder in a way than any battle in which he afterwards engaged. In this battle there was no one to help or advise him. He had to fight it out alone. Alone under the Kentucky skies, with his conscience, and his sense of what was right for him.

Colonel Eaton was very little help to Halsey in making up his mind as to the great struggle before his country. He was naturally a quiet man, and especially so on politics. So Halsey attended political meetings and read the papers and kept up a terrific thinking which would not let him rest by day or night. With this incessant struggle with himself a great sense of restlessness came over the boy.

He could not set himself to do anything for long. His greatest comfort at these times was in taking long rides on Palo'mine.

Again they took long journeys into the mountains. But even this was rather dangerous at this time, as the factional differences in Kentucky had already begun to show themselves. All through the war Kentucky stayed in the Union, but many of her Blue Grass boys went with the Confederacy.

Finally there came the battle of Bull Run, in which the Federal forces were badly defeated and things indeed looked dark. This defeat of the army of the United States came as a shock to Halsey. It seemed incredible to him that such a thing could have happened.

He never knew how he made up his mind. He always said that it was something greater than he that decided. But when he finally saw the light it came to him as a flash. He was riding through Lexington one twilight on Palo'mine, when he chanced to look up on the city hall and there upon the flag staff was Old Glory, bright and beautiful in the rays of the setting sun. Tears filled Halsey's eyes at the sight of the beautiful flag, and a great lump came into his throat.

Then it was that he knew he could follow that flag through brimstone and fire, to death if need be. That was his country's flag and he knew no other.

So he turned his face homeward to tell Uncle Hillery of his decision. Halsey sought out his uncle as soon as he reached home to tell him the great news. He dreaded the ordeal and wanted to have it over as soon as possible. He found Colonel Eaton in the library reading. He greeted him in that fatherly way he had always shown him, but Halsey could not but notice that he looked anxious.

"I have made up my mind," said Halsey, coming at once to the point. "It has taken me quite a spell but I wanted to be right."

Uncle Hillery gave him a sharp glance and then looked back at his book.

"All right, son," he said, "let's have your decision."

"I am going to fight for my country," said Halsey simply, "I saw the flag the other night upon the flag staff at Lexington and it came to me that was the thing to do."

Colonel Eaton got up slowly and went to the window where he stood looking out at the landscape for a long time. He was so quiet that Halsey almost wondered if he had heard him.

"I am sorry if you are disappointed, Uncle," said the boy, "I have got to do what seems right to me."

Colonel Eaton turned and faced his nephew. He was very pale, but his voice was quiet and possessed as he spoke.

"That is right, Halsey," he said. "We have all got to do what looks right to us. I shall probably join the Confederate army."

"Oh," cried Halsey, "will I have to fight against you, Uncle?"

"I am afraid so, and against a part of Kentucky. Our state will probably stay in the Union, but many of our Blue Grass sons will join the Confederate army."

"Uncle Hillery, I can never fight against you. That would be murder!"

"War is murder any way you look at it, son. But we will all have to obey the call

until we get more civilized. I will have Rastus saddle Palo'mine. He will be ready any time you say."

"What, must I go tonight?" cried Halsey surprised. It seemed to him that his uncle wanted to get rid of him.

"I think it would be best so," replied Colonel Eaton quietly. "You had better see your Aunt Julia and Margaret." Then Uncle Hillery took his nephew gently by both hands and looked into his eyes. Halsey never forgot the tenderness of his eyes and voice as he spoke.

"Individually it does not matter so very much to us which flag we fight under," he said. "But it does matter that we are good soldiers. Halsey, my boy, I want you to be a good soldier, the very best, even though you fight against me."

"I will try, Uncle Hillery. I will do my best," was all the boy could say.

"And remember this, Halsey, if we ever meet in battle, we sheathe our swords towards each other. This is a case where blood must count."

"Yes, yes, Uncle. Oh, God, that must never come!"

"I hope it will not, but we never can tell. This is going to be a terrible war, especially in our own state."

They stood for several seconds holding on to each other's hands and Halsey never forgot the tenderness of his uncle, or the kindly look in his eyes. This picture of his foster father clinging to him so tenderly was the last picture that he ever had of Uncle Hillery at close range, and he never spoke to him again.

Finally because he could not speak Halsey turned and went out of the library and sought his aunt. He found her in the sewing room.

"Aunt Julia," choked the boy. "I have come to say goodbye. I am going with the Union army. Uncle thinks I had better go tonight."

"You have always been a good boy, Halsey," said his aunt drawing him close to her and kissing him in a motherly way. "We will always love you no matter what comes.

You will find your clothes in readiness in your bureau. We have expected this for weeks."

Halsey found his cousin in her den, where she spent much of her time drawing, for she was something of an artist. The room was cluttered with pictures and books and also her riding togs.

Halsey stood in the doorway looking in at her for several seconds before speaking.

"Why such a tragic air?" she inquired looking up from her easel.

"I have come to say goodbye, Peggy," choked the boy. "I am going away in a few minutes. I am going to join the Union army."

"What!" cried the girl, "the Union army, did you say?"

"Yes," said Halsey sadly, "I have but one country."

Peggy said nothing, but rose from her easel and began rummaging around among a pile of papers.

"What are you looking for, Peg?" asked the boy.

"My riding quirt," said the girl. There was a bright red spot on either cheek, but her voice was quiet and contained.

"What do you want of that?" asked Halsey dumfounded. "You are not going to ride, are you?"

"I want it to use on you. You are a traitor to your Uncle Hillery, to your aunt, to me, and to your state."

Halsey looked thunderstruck. For several seconds he stood gazing at his cousin. Then he stepped quietly to her side and pulled the quirt from between the papers.

"Here it is, Peg," he said, folding his arms and facing her, "I am ready."

She took the whip dazedly and raised it as though to strike. But it fell from her nerveless hands with a clatter to the floor. Then with a wild cry of pain she threw herself in her cousin's arms.

"Oh, Halsey, forgive me, forgive me," she sobbed. "I am such a firebrand. But I had dreamed of you as a Colonel in the Confederate army."

They did not speak again. The hearts of

each were too full. But finally Peggy raised her tear-stained face to be kissed and she kissed her cousin and gazed long into his eyes before she would let him go.

At last Halsey went slowly down stairs and got his clothing. Half an hour later he was jogging slowly along the Kentucky turnpike on Palo'mine. He usually sat his horse erect, but now his young shoulders were stooped and his head was bowed with the sorrow on his young life. He did not see any of the familiar scenes.

He only saw the sad tender face of his uncle and the tear-stained face of his cousin Margaret. He could still feel her kiss upon his lips. But it had been the kiss of a sweetheart that Peggy had given him and not that of a sister.

This was one thing that the boy had still to learn, when he needed comfort most. So Halsey and Palo'mine headed for the Ohio River and the greatest adventure they had ever had together had begun.

CHAPTER IX

BOOTS AND SADDLES

THREE days of leisurely riding brought Halsey and Palo'mine to the training camp in Ohio which had been their destination. Here they were at once enrolled with a thousand other raw recruits who were being moulded into cavalry men.

Almost the first thing that Halsey learned on coming into camp was the fact that he was no longer to be a free agent. No longer was his own personality to be dominant, but henceforth he would be a unit, a cog in a mighty machine. He was just one of a long line of waiting men, where no favors were granted, and none asked; where there was to be no favorites, and no partiality.

The fact that this aggregate of men, each different in his looks and manner of speech and ways of thinking, were all to be one was

brought home to Halsey the first morning after he arrived in camp.

He was standing with some recruits watching some perfected troops who were marching away that morning to the front. One minute they had been a conglomerate mass; just horses and men stretching away as far as the eye could reach. Then came a clear bugle call and the meaningless mass changed in a twinkling into the serried formation of the cavalry. Each man stood by the side of his horse with his hand resting on the bridle rein. Then came another clear call from the bugle and as one man the regiment rose to the saddle. There they sat like marble men each at attention, looking straight ahead, between his horse's ears.

The horses stood almost as motionless as the men. Occasionally a horse's ear could be seen to flick when a fly lit upon it, that was all.

For at least a minute they sat thus; a long line of equestrian statues, with no indication of the mighty force they represented. Then came another imperative call from the bu-

gler and the regiment started. Troop A first, and then each successive troop swinging into line and following on just as though the whole had been not a disjointed mass of separate aggregations, but just one machine, as indeed it was.

It was splendid. It was superb, and the watching recruits swung their caps and shouted.

When Halsey had ridden away from Eaton Manor on that summer morning he had never imagined that he would have to be told how to put a blanket on a horse, or how to bridle and saddle a horse. He had thought that the life of a cavalryman would be like the pictures he had seen,—men in bright uniforms riding prancing horses to the sound of martial music. But of the endless detail of training he had not even dreamed.

Of course he knew a great deal about horses, much more in fact than the corporal who each morning ordered him about. But many of the men did not know, so the training had to be for all. It was right that the

training should begin with the rudiments of horsemanship. It irked Halsey to have a sergeant watch him while he groomed Palo'-mine, but the sergeant soon saw that he was onto his job and let him do as he would.

In pictures which Halsey had seen of cavalry men they had been dashing upon the enemy with flashing sabres and there had been no indication of what went to make a trooper. But he very soon found out. He had never imagined that on a long march he would have to walk twenty-five percent. of the way to rest his horse. He had not thought that each rod of the way a certain course of action would be prescribed, canter ten minutes, trot ten minutes and then rest ten minutes.

In such a matter as marching he had imagined the troopers would be left to themselves. But not so. Everything was prescribed. All these things had been worked out scientifically and the best way discovered. So the rule and the method were always enforced.

Then there were the endless drills, such

grilling work as Halsey had never experienced. From the moment in the morning just at sunrise when the bugle blew the staccato notes of reveille, till evening when the sad sweet strains of taps sent the tired men to their tents, it was work, work, work.

There was a jolly little refrain which the men said reveille call stood for and it always seemed to Halsey that the bugler was sounding these words, "Trata, tarata! I can't get 'em up, I can't get 'em up, I can't get 'em up in the mo-or-ning!"

In the evening after supper the men would lie around the pleasant campfires, singing old songs, telling stories and jokes, or playing cards and other games.

Sometimes Halsey joined these merry parties, but often he would steal away to the stable as it was called, to be alone with Palo'mine. He always told him of the day's fortunes and the fine horse kept Halsey from being too lonesome so far from his beloved Blue Grass country.

Halsey and the other would-be troopers were not only taught the complicated cav-

alry drill, but also the manual of arms and likewise put through the setting-up exercises each day, so there was no end of work.

But it was chiefly as cavalry men that they were drilled. They were taught to attack infantry, artillery and also other cavalry. For convenience in illustrating these different maneuvers, they were drilled in connection with the other two branches of the army, other camps nearby furnishing the infantry troops and the batteries of artillery. They were taught to attack at a walk, a trot, and a gallop. To attack infantry when each man was kneeling, with the butt of his musket on the ground and the point of his bayonet sticking up to receive the trooper's horse. They were taught to ride down the gunners at their guns in the artillery, and to cut them down with their sabres. The attacks and sham battles which they fought with other cavalry were most exciting.

It was anything but fun to be aroused in the middle of the night to make an attack upon infantry which had stolen away at dusk and was now concealed in a distant

woods. But all this hard training was in preparation for the real fighting which they would have to do later, so the men went willingly on with it.

For three months they went through the most intensive training, and became tanned and muscle-hardened soldiers inured to almost anything. But they were soon to learn this had been but child's play compared to the real war game.

When Halsey and Palo'mine had first come to camp they had taken part in some of the running races which the soldiers had staged during the evenings after supper. In these races Palo'mine easily distinguished himself and his young master, for he could easily distance any horse in the cavalry. But Halsey soon discovered that it was not well to attract too much attention with Palo'mine, as every officer in camp became covetous of the wonderful Kentucky thoroughbred and Halsey continually trembled in his shoes for fear that they would take Palo'mine away from him for some high officer's use, and give him an inferior

horse. So he finally contented himself by teaching Palo'mine many new tricks. Among other things he taught him to kneel down at command, so that a wounded man could crawl upon his back without using his legs. When one of the soldiers questioned him as to why he taught him that accomplishment, Halsey had replied that it might be useful to him some day. One never could tell what would happen and it was well to be ready. This trick of Palo'mine's did afterwards stand Halsey in good stead.

In the evenings while the other men were playing games, talking and singing songs, Halsey often took the time to write home. He and Peggy exchanged three letters each week, so he was kept in touch with Eaton Manor. Uncle Hillery had written for several weeks, but finally his letters ceased and Peggy wrote Halsey that he had joined the Confederate army. So it was to be as Colonel Eaton had said. He was to fight for one side while his nephew fought for the other.

Then Halsey remembered his uncle's

parting injunction, "whichever side you fight for, be a good soldier. That is the principal thing." Halsey meant to be that and with Palo'mine to help he could hardly fail.

Finally there came that eventful day when Halsey's own regiment marched away to join Grant's army, which was about to begin the first great campaign of the war.

There had been little fighting during the summer of 1861. Outside of the disaster to the Union army at Bull Run the only important battle had been that of Wilson Creek, Missouri, on August 10. In this Missouri battle General Lyons had formed his men in battle line and then cried, "Forward men, I will lead you." Twenty minutes later he was lying dead upon the field. But he had set a noble example to the Federal officers for all time and the battle had broken the Confederate hold upon Missouri, so his great sacrifice had not been made in vain.

Early in the summer of '61, the Confederates had stretched a line of forti-

fications from Cumberland Gap in the southeastern corner of Kentucky, to Columbus on the Mississippi River in Tennessee. This chain of forts curved down into Tennessee, with Forts Henry and Donelson in the middle as the key stones. It was against these forts that Grant had marched over land, while he sent the gun boats down the Tennessee river to coöperate with him.

It was early winter and the mud and snow were equally divided. It was hard work hauling artillery over the muddy roads. Many of the streams were at flood tide and all conditions were of the very worst.

When they arrived within striking distance of the line of forts very rigorous winter conditions set in, so that some of the men were frozen in their tents.

Halsey's own regiment had been designated as a raiding column which was to do all the damage it could to the enemy without engaging in any decisive battle. So the regiment early gained the name of the Buckeye Raiders, which it kept all through the war. Sometimes the men went in force,

but more often in a squadron, or even in a single troop. Their work was to cross into Tennessee between forts and cut railway connections, to tear up tracks, burn bridges, capture provision trains, and do all the damage to the Confederate cause they could. So they were here today and tomorrow somewhere else. They went like the wind and struck like lightning. They carried little baggage and lived off the country, which meant that they frequently went hungry. Often they slept in the snow with no tent over them, while their horses browsed like deer.

At first Halsey had thought the work very cruel, destructive and inhuman. His first battle which was little more than a skirmish, made a great impression on him. He and Palo'mine were taken prisoners and but for the lucky termination of the affair their usefulness to Uncle Sam might have ended then and there.

The Buckeye Raiders had surprised a large wagon train of provisions for the Confederate army about fifty miles south of the

Confederate lines. This train was guarded by two companies of infantry.

The Raiders consisted of a squadron of cavalry. This was three troops. The cavalry men had at once charged the infantry, which had knelt down, each man with the butt of his musket resting on the ground and with both hands on the barrel of the gun, and the bayonet sticking up to receive the horse. When Palo'mine had come within jumping distance of the line of kneeling men, either his fence jumping instinct had suddenly asserted itself, or Halsey had unconsciously given him the signal to jump, for he had cleared the line of kneeling men just as though they had been a seven foot fence. The soldiers were so astonished that they had not had presence of mind enough to thrust at him with their bayonets as he passed. So Halsey had suddenly found himself within the hollow square of Confederates with two clutching at his bridle rein.

It was useless to fight under these conditions, so he had quickly dismounted and

given up his sabre and his carbine. He and Palo'mine had then retired fifty or a hundred feet behind the gray line and watched the battle, the rest of his comrades having fallen back.

But they charged again and the bullets from the carbines were soon spitting all about Halsey and Palo'mine.

To Halsey standing behind his horse the skirmish seemed the most terrible thing he had ever witnessed. To see his own comrades reel in their saddles and fall while their horses went galloping madly away, made him sick at heart. Then to see the horses madly plunging upon the bayonets made him faint, not to mention the dead and dying gray soldiers all about him. The third charge was successful and the troopers rode over the infantry and took most of them prisoners, and he and Palo'mine were again free. The wagons were also taken and the whole train was soon making its way towards Grant's army, although they finally had to destroy the supplies and flee

themselves to escape a larger force of Confederate cavalry.

Finally on February 16, 1862, came the glorious news that Forts Henry and Donelson had surrendered and this was soon followed by the tidings of the capture of Island Number Ten on April 7. The Confederates then moved their lines southwards with the center at Jackson, the left at New Madrid, and the right at Murfreesboro, so that most of Tennessee was again under the Union troops. Grant followed the Confederate lines southward, and was soon in position to fight the great battle of Shiloh. Halsey and Palo'mine went with them, although they still did raiding and patrol duty. This kept them ever on the move, with long forced marches. It was still their function to strike like lightning and then disappear before they could be punished.

Finally Halsey and Palo'mine were given special scouting in the Tennessee mountains. It was desperate work, with danger on every hand.

Again and again, Palo'mine's speed and Halsey's daredevil riding saved their lives and brought them renown as the best scout and the best horse in the Union cavalry, and the pride of the Buckeye Raiders.

CHAPTER X

THE FORTUNES OF WAR

IN the late summer of 1862 Halsey and Palo'mine were with the Buckeye Raiders in the Tennessee mountains. The Raiders were acting like the rest of the cavalry, as the advance guard of the army feeling out the enemies' position. They were advancing in three columns, marching parallel.

Just as the cavalry was the advance guard of the army, so the scouts were the fore-runners of the cavalry. They went ahead to spy out the country, to locate small bodies of the enemies' cavalry and make maps of the country. Halsey and Palo'mine were always included in these scouting parties. It was the most dangerous service in the army. Not only were they liable to be ambushed, but some of the Tennesseans in the remote districts did not fully conform to

the non-combatant regulations of the army, so they would take a shot at a soldier either in a blue or gray uniform whenever a good opportunity offered. So the danger was twofold.

It was most fatiguing work to ride for hours with the nerves keyed to the highest pitch, with ears and eyes and even the sense of smell straining for a sight or sound of the enemy. They must make no campfires and often carried no provisions.

It was a beautiful country of deep slumberous valleys and majestic mountains. The valleys were very fertile and crops and fruit abounded, especially peaches. The mountain sides were usually heavily timbered with winding wagon roads leading half way up their sides, and bridle paths nearly to the top when it was not too precipitous.

The Raiders had been camped in a deep valley, with another valley just over the mountains ahead. Word had come to them that the enemies' cavalry was in the valley on the opposite side of the mountain. So

Halsey and Palo'mine and several other scouts set out to discover what they could about this force. Halsey went in company with another scout named Hank Hawkings. He was a tall lank Hoosier State boy of about Halsey's own age. A superb horseman and a great shot. They had done much scouting together.

This day they ascended the mountain cautiously until they were about half a mile from the crest. There they left their horses hidden in a thicket and proceeded the rest of the way on foot. They took advantage of every bit of cover and went forward like Indians on the war path. There was no telling when they might meet a belligerent mountaineer, or some of the enemy. They had reached the top of the mountain and were creeping along to get a more sightly spot from which to see over into the valley on the other side, when Halsey who was slightly ahead stopped short in his tracks, and pulled his companion's sleeve. Both peered out of the bushes and along the top of the mountain.

About fifty yards away on the very crest of the mountain, and close to the edge of a precipitous cliff, a solitary horseman sat upon a black horse. He was peering intently into the valley from which they had just come. He was dressed in the unmistakable gray uniform of the Confederacy. He was in a position admirably screened by some small bushes from the valley below, but very conspicuous from where the Union scouts were concealed. His horse was black, a beautiful animal with a proud chest and sleek limbs. The man sat upon him like a centaur.

For five seconds the scouts in blue looked at him, then Halsey realized the fact that this Confederate scout had probably seen their camp and knew all about the Union cavalry. He would report to his comrades in the valley opposite. Instinctively Halsey's soldier's training asserted itself. There was a way to stop that. He raised his carbine to his shoulder and took a hasty aim. His finger was feeling for the trigger and had almost pressed it when a wild cry

broke from his lips and his rifle fell clattering to among the rocks. He staggered as though he would fall and became deadly pale. He tried to speak to his companion, but his lips only uttered strange sounds and he fell to his knees and began groping blindly for his carbine. At the same moment Hank's carbine cracked. This sinister sound brought back all of Halsey's alertness and initiative. He sprang up, clutching madly at his comrade's arm and pushing up his carbine.

"For God's sake, don't," he cried. "You might kill him. What have you done? Did you kill him?"

Hank gazed at him in mute astonishment. What was the matter with his comrade? Had he been wounded, or had he gone mad? The other continued to clutch for his carbine. Finally Hank found his tongue.

"Gol darn it, Halsey. What is the matter with you? That's the first time I ever see you object to a man's getting a Johnnie. Did a bullet hit your head? I hain't heered any shot."

"Did you kill him?" repeated Halsey, his voice hoarse with excitement, and trembling like an aspen.

"Wol," said his companion, still eyeing him curiously, "ef you mean the man, I didn't. I got the hoss instead."

"Thank God," cried Halsey fervently, but Hank continued to stare. "It was my Uncle Hillery, the only father I ever knew," said Halsey when the suspense had become unbearable. "Are you sure you didn't hit him?"

"Perfectly sure," said Hank solemnly. "Gosh all hemlock, it was your uncle! Gosh a'mighty! When I plugged the hoss he wavered for a minute on the edge of the cliff and the old man slipped from his back and ran into the bushes, but the hoss he went over the cliff."

"Poor Sultan," said Halsey. "But I am not sure about Uncle Hillery."

The words were barely out of his lips when a hunting rifle cracked in the bushes along the side of the mountain and a bullet

cut a twig from the tree just above Halsey's head. Hank laughed under his breath.

"There is your dear uncle trying to shoot us. You see he is all right."

"Let's get out of this," said Halsey. So they hastened along the top of the mountain and made their reconnaissance of the enemy from that position. As it turned out this gave them the best view of the enemies' force and they secured a good report.

But Halsey continued to mutter to himself. "Uncle Hillery, I might have shot you. I might have shot you."

"But you didn't," put in Hank each time when he was seized with one of these strange spells of trembling and muttering.

"No, thank God, I didn't, but you don't know how near I came to pulling that trigger. It was only God that saved me."

It was days before Halsey shook off the horror of that experience and he never really fully out-grew it, for it haunted his dreams for years.

When they returned to camp they re-

ported seeing a Confederate scout on the mountain top. They had fired at him and had killed his horse, but he had escaped. This was all it was necessary to tell and it served its purpose. Halsey was much relieved when they finally moved out of that country and went with the army on a distant campaign.

Early in the spring of 1863 the Union army with which Halsey and Palo'mine were fighting was spread out along a narrow plain at the foot of a long high mountain. The Confederates were posted upon the mountain in an almost unassailable position. Their rifle pits extended for an eighth of a mile out on the plain, their small artillery was at the foot of the mountain, their medium weight artillery part way up the mountain side, while the heavy artillery was on the top of the mountain. They had dragged it there with great toil. Their position was considered almost impregnable. But at the same time the Union General had decided to attack. He had set his army in battle array. His left was in

a thick woods in a strong position, and this position was the key to the situation. The center was parallel with the mountain, while the right was at the other end of the mountain.

Finally when the Confederates saw that the Federals were going to attack shortly they launched a crushing blow at the left end, hoping to drive it back upon the center.

The vital left resisted stubbornly, yet rod by rod it was driven back, and the Union General saw his chances for launching a successful battle waning. If the left gave way even the center must be abandoned as it could not be defended from a lateral position. The left must be held at any cost, so the general sent orderly after orderly across the plains in an endeavor to get word to the left wing to hold on. But the Confederates saw the messengers and guessed what the message was, so sharpshooters and artillery opened fire upon the unfortunate messengers. All had perished in the attempt. Finally the general summoned his chief of cavalry and said,

"I want another messenger to send across to the left. We must get word to General Blank to hold on. I want the best horse and the best rider that you have. A man who isn't afraid to go on a sure death errand for Uncle Sam. Have you such a man?"

"Yes, I know of one such. He is the best rider in the United States cavalry and he rides the best horse in the army."

"Is he lucky?" asked the General.

"He has come through more tight places than any other man in the service."

"What is his name?"

"Lieut. Halsey Eaton. Somehow he always gets through."

"All right. Send him to me."

Five minutes later Halsey was saluting the General.

"Lieut. Eaton," said the general, speaking in his quick, incisive manner, "I have got to get word to General Blank on our left, to hold the woods at any cost. If that fails we will be beaten before the battle begins. The Confederates have seen this and have struck first. I have sent three

orderlies and they have all fallen by the way. Do you want to see if you can get through?"

Halsey looked grave at the implied command, but said simply, "I am not looking for such a job, General, but I will go anywhere you send me and do my best. If it is possible to get through Palo'mine and I ought to be able to do it."

"Good!" cried the General. "Spoken like a man. I will order the rifle pits cleared and that will help a little. That will be the first phase of the battle anyhow. You can go under the cover of that attack. Be ready in five minutes, and good luck to you. Remember that the entire battle is at stake. God keep you, my boy."

Five minutes later Halsey sat upon Palo'mine at the extreme right, watching the Union infantry come scurrying out of their own rifle pits half a mile out on the plain and start running across the fields as though for their lives, towards the Confederate rifle pits. Each man bent as low as he could and run. In this way they offered the smallest target to the hurricane of

bullets which greeted them. Three regiments were in the charge. Comrades fell at every rod. They fell by the scores, but the rest kept right on.

As soon as the attack was well under way Halsey and Palo'mine started on their terrible ride. They went at a slow trot at first so as not to attract attention. But soon the sharpshooters sighted them and guessed their mission and the bullets began spitting all about them. The large minie balls hummed like tops, while the smaller bullets from the hunting rifle sang a peculiar whining song of death which was all their own. The bullets kicked up little spurts of dust about the brave trooper and his noble horse until the ground looked like a lake with a smart shower falling upon it.

Halsey soon saw that it was suicide to dally along so slowly when the bullets were coming so thick, so he slapped Palo'mine's side with his sabre and he broke into a wild gallop. This strategy succeeded for a minute or two. As Halsey had judged, the

sharpshooters greatly under-estimated Pal-o'mine's speed, so for a little while the bullets fell behind them. But soon the riflemen readjusted their fire and again the missiles of death were striking all about them. So there was nothing to do but to ride for all they were worth. It was another desperate race. Not the great sweepstake but a race for life, and for the success of the Union army.

Finally the bullets came so thick and they struck so closely that Halsey resorted to an old ruse of his, one that he had learned when he had plenty of time for trick riding. He slipped to the side of his horse, just keeping his left foot in the stirrup, and holding with his right arm over the horse's neck, while with his right foot he held on to the cantle of the saddle. This nearly hid his body from the riflemen.

Far up on the mountain side two Confederate officers were watching the gallant rider through their glasses. When Halsey suddenly disappeared from the horse's back, the younger cried out, "There he goes.

They have got him. I thought he could not live in that storm."

"No," said the older man quietly, although the hand in which he held the field glass trembled, "He is riding on the side of his horse. I have seen it done before."

Presently the Confederate artillery which had not been directed at the flying trooper opened up. The two watchers on the mountain side could see the shrapnel spattering all about them.

"What a hell that must be," said the younger man. "I don't see how they can keep going. That shrapnel will get them presently."

"Most of it falls behind them," said his companion. "You see our gunners underestimate the speed of that horse."

Presently as they watched with straining eyes the horse was seen to pause in his flight. For a second he almost stopped and then he gave a great leap of twenty feet.

"There we have got him," cried the young man.

"I think not," said the other officer.

"He was leaping a rifle pit. I think you will see his rider again now. If they are in the rifle pits it will take some good driving as well as nerve."

Almost as he spoke the rider whose body had been hidden for the past two or three minutes came up in his saddle like a jack-in-the-box.

"There," said the senior officer. "What did I tell you? Now we will see some real riding. If I am not mistaken that horse is a Kentucky hunter. It is nothing for him to jump twenty-foot ditches. He can go almost anywhere. Cross country riding is second nature to him."

With the reappearance of the rider the riflemen who had been driven out of their rifle pits and had taken refuge at the foot of the mountain redoubled their efforts. The bullets could be seen kicking up dirt all about the horseman, who was now riding like the wind, his horse occasionally stopping to make a great leap of a rifle pit, or making a short detour to avoid others.

Soon the mortars at the top of the moun-

tain opened fire. Then great shells went curving into the sky and fell far out on the plain. All fired at the unfortunate horseman.

Presently a mighty shell fell almost in their path. The rider struck the horse sharply with his sabre and guided him skillfully to one side just as the shell exploded. Both man and horse were hidden in a cloud of dust and smoke.

"There, now we have got him," cried the Captain. His companion said nothing, but his face was intense and he watched as though his life depended on the fate of the trooper.

Presently both man and horse emerged from the cloud of dust and galloped on.

"He is still going," said the other Confederate.

Shell after shell was hurled at them. The shrapnel spattered the ground about them and the bullets kicked up clouds of dust.

"I don't see why we don't hit him," said the young officer again.

"Well," said his companion, "he is a rapidly moving target and perhaps something that is greater than we are is shielding him."

His companion looked at him sharply. "I should almost think you wanted him to get through," said he.

"I do," said the older man quickly. "Of course I am for our cause. But that trooper is my nephew, Halsey Eaton, and that horse is Palo'mine, who won the sweepstake as King Crescent in 1860. Now you know why I am so interested."

"God," said the other officer, "What a hell war is! What a pity it is to offer such a horse as that for cannon fodder."

"And such a boy," said Uncle Hillery. "Listen, they have stopped firing."

It was true. The firing all along the line had ceased.

"Our gunners recognize his gallant deed. This silence means that the Confederate army is taking off its hat to my nephew. Thank God!" choked the Colonel.

Five minutes later the trooper and his

splendid horse disappeared in the woods at the left and the General's message was delivered.

All know the story of the left wing that held on, while the army formed its battle lines, making one of the greatest victories of the Union troops possible. But few know the story of the brave trooper and his Kentucky thoroughbred who carried the word to hold on, across three miles of maelstrom of shot and shell through a veritable mouth of hell.

The following morning at the Colonel's command Halsey and Palo'mine rode out in front of the regiment and Halsey received the insignia of a Major, while Palo'mine was patted on the nose by the Colonel and told that he was the finest old nag in the Union cavalry, which pleased his master even more than the promotion.

CHAPTER XI

PEGGY SHOWS HER COLORS

IN the summer of 1864 when Grant was pounding away in the wilderness, and Sherman was on his victorious march to the sea, and the fate of the confederacy seemed sealed, Halsey received a letter from Eaton Manor that filled him with sorrow.

It was from his cousin Margaret, and informed him that Aunt Julia had died the month before. The letter also said that Uncle Hillery had been invalided home and was seriously ill. He wanted to see his nephew once more. Could Halsey secure a short furlough and come home? This might be Uncle Hillery's last request.

Halsey at once sought his Colonel and showed him the letter. As all the Union Armies at this time outnumbered the Confederates opposing them, it was an easy

matter to secure the furlough. So within the hour Halsey and Palo'mine were on the way home.

They had been operating with General Thompson in the eastern part of Tennessee, so it was only a matter of two or three hundred miles, as the crow flies, to Eaton Manor.

The greater portion of Tennessee and Kentucky were at this time nearly free from Confederate soldiers. Only an occasional raiding or foraging party were seen. Peggy had written that a band of Confederate Guerrillas had been active in the Kentucky mountains for several weeks, although the Guerrillas rarely appeared in the Blue Grass country.

Halsey arrived in sight of Eaton Manor at about nine o'clock in the evening. He noted from afar that there was only one light in the house, in the upper chamber. The place seemed very quiet and forsaken, and there was something about it that Halsey did not like. So, he adopted his soldier's policy of precaution.

He jumped Palo'mine over the limestone wall into the orchard and hitched him to a small fruit tree, while he approached Eaton Manor from the rear. At the back of the house there was a small clump of cedars and the path from the house to the orchard led directly through it. But Halsey had threaded this path in total darkness many a time in boyhood days and he knew its every step. Midway in the cedars, the path wound between two trees that set close together, and as Halsey squeezed through this natural gateway a strong hand clutched him from either side, and almost before he knew what was happening, he had been pinned to one of the trees by two men, in whose hands he struggled vainly. He had no chance to draw his revolver and to cry out was useless and foolish. Finally his hands were tied behind his back and he was led around in front of the house.

"What am I, a prisoner of war?" asked Halsey when he had recovered his breath and his senses after the struggle.

The two men laughed and their laughter

had a sinister sound to Halsey. "We don't know nothing about prisoners of war, I reckon," said one of the men in the familiar mountaineer drawl. "But you are our prisoner, young fellow."

"That is all right," returned Halsey. "I have been taken prisoner before. What are you going to do with me."

"Well," said the other mountaineer, "you won't ever be taken prisoner again. We are going to string you up, young fellow, to this here limb overhead, right here in front of your Uncle's house. You've made the Confederacy trouble enough. I reckon me and Bill will be in for promotion when we have finished this job."

"You can't hang me, I am not a spy. I have on my regulation uniform."

"We can't, can't we? We'll see. I reckon you'll think different in about two minutes."

"I demand my right to be tried by court martial," insisted Halsey, seeing that his plight was desperate.

"You can keep right on demanding,

young fellow, and that's all the good it will do you. We'll hang you first and then talk about it after."

Vainly Halsey insisted that he had not been a spy and that he had his uniform on and that he should be tried by court martial. His two captors only laughed at him while their preparations for stringing him up went steadily forward. One of them returned to the cedars and brought back a twenty-foot rope which he threw over the limb of the old ash, the same limb that Halsey's swing had been tied to when he was a boy. Was he about to swing on this familiar limb for the last time?

He thought of calling for help but that seemed childish. He was a soldier and he would die like one if he had to. The man named Bill caught the loose end of the rope which had been thrown over the limb and was about to pull on it with all his weight, when something happened which was not on the program. There were two quick shots, so close together that they gave but one echo. The hand on the rope dropped

helpless by the man's side, while his companion clutched at his own shoulder, groaning and cursing.

In less time than it takes to tell it, the cowardly ruffians had taken to their heels and Halsey was alone under the old ash. Then the front door at Eaton Manor opened quietly and Peggy Moore came cautiously out, still holding in her hand a smoking revolver.

"The dirty cowards," she cried indignately. "No real Confederate soldier would do a thing like that. They are Buck Dugan's guerrillas, and unworthy of the name of soldier. There is a leak in the post office. They must have known about my letter."

"Peggy, you brave girl, you trump, did you fire those shots? Did you do that brave thing for old glory?"

"The scoundrels, I wish I had killed them," cried Peggy excitedly, ignoring his question.

"Listen," cried Halsey. "I hear horsemen up the turnpike. There must be a

dozen of them. They are coming back with their comrades. Did you fire those shots for old glory, Peggy you little rebel?"

"No," cried Peggy excitedly. "You must go, they will be here in a minute."

"I will not stir a step until you tell me why you did that brave thing for me."

Then the girl looked straight up into his face proudly and defiantly, and her eyes were like stars. "I love you, Halsey," she said simply, "that was why I did it. It was not for old glory. Now run for your life."

He caught her in his arms and gave her a bear hug and a passionate kiss, then set her down gently.

"But, Uncle Hillery," cried Halsey, "I shall not be able to see him."

"It is too late," returned Peggy with a sob. "He died an hour ago."

All this time, down in the turnpike the thunder of horses hoofs grew nearer, so Halsey took Peggy's advice and ran for his life, while she hurried inside and bolted the heavy front door. Twenty seconds later

she heard Palo'mine jump the orchard wall and gallop down the turnpike like the wind.

As the guerrillas came abreast of the house and espied Halsey and Palo'mine down in the turnpike their carbines began to crack and they gave vent to the rebel yell which Peggy thought the most blood curdling sound she had ever heard. Although the war had taken Halsey and Uncle Hillery away from Eaton Manor, yet hitherto it had seemed afar off. But, here it was now, thundering at the very gates of Eaton Manor. As the full significance of the dramatic scene outside came home to Peggy the icy hand of fear clutched her heart, for she realized that these lawless men would hunt Halsey down and kill him, just as relentlessly as the hounds had the fox in the days of old.

There was but one recourse for the panic stricken girl in this hour of horror, so she threw herself upon her knees and leaning her head on Uncle Hillery's great arm chair, prayed as she had never prayed before.

"O God of battle," she sobbed, "thou who

dost love the righteous and hate the wicked, be with my soldier tonight. In the days of old, thou didst put stumbling blocks in the way of evil doers, so, O God, cause their horses to stumble and their shots to go wild. Cover Halsey with protecting darkness and blind their eyes with a terrible light. Give the wings of the wind to Palo'mine and the heart of a lion to his rider. Hide him in thy pavilion, O God, and shield him from his enemies."

Feverishly did she pray, while the terrible minutes went by. But at last, a great sense of peace came to her and she felt sure that her prayer had been answered. As she arose from her knees, she heard the sound of hoof beats down the turnpike from the direction the guerrillas had taken a half an hour before. They were coming back, but much more slowly than they had gone.

Then another great fear clutched the heart of the distraught girl. They would stop at Eaton Manor and demand to know who had fired the shots. What would she tell them? Again she turned to God. He

would have to tell her what to say as he had Moses of old.

When the guerrillas reached the house two of their number dismounted and began beating on the front door, and calling loudly to be admitted. Peggy's first thought was to ignore them, but they were so persistent that she finally threw open the door and faced them defiantly.

"Sir, this is Colonel Hillery Eaton's house. He was an officer in the Confederate Army and he now lies dead in his chamber upstairs. Why do you come here in this manner, disturbing the house where death has entered?"

"Wal, I beg your pardon Miss, we didn't know the Colonel was dead. But I want to know who that young fellow was that my men nabbed here behind your house."

"That was my cousin, Major Halsey Eaton, of the Buckeye Raiders," said Peggy defiantly.

"Wal, we reckoned it was. Did you hear them shots that was fired at my men?"

"Yes," returned Peggy.

"Wal, from what direction did they come, Miss?"

"It would be hard to say, sir, there are so many echoes," replied the girl.

"Did you see the flash?"

"No, sir," said Peggy.

"You couldn't tell who fired them shots, could you Miss?"

"No, I couldn't," said Peggy truthfully. "Did you get Major Eaton?" She asked this question with her heart in her mouth. At the inquiry the guerrilla broke into a loud guffaw, in which his comrades joined sheepishly.

"Wal, I should rather say not, Miss. Why that 'ere hoss your cousin rode is just a streak of greased lightning. He ran right out of sight and sound of us in about fifteen minutes. He must be over in West Virginy by this time ef that is where he is agoing."

Peggy dared risk no further questioning so she said frigidly, "My uncle has just died and there are many things I must do for him, so, good night."

“Good night, Miss,” said the guerrilla sheepishly. “I’m mighty sorry.” And they mounted their horses and rode away, while Peggy went up stairs to her silent vigil with all that remained of Uncle Hillery, the man who had been the only father that she and Halsey had ever known.

CHAPTER XII

PALO'MINE SAVES THE DAY

ON the 19th of October, in 1864, one of the Union armies was encamped on Pine River. They had driven the Confederates under General Jubal Early from Lancaster two weeks before, capturing many men and guns and sent them pell mell up the Shenandoah Valley. So on this night, as they encamped on Pine River, they felt very secure.

The left wing was held by the 19th corps who were encamped in a woods. They had thrown out many pickets as the ground in front of them was also wooded. The center was held by the 8th corps and the right, by the 7th.

General Bill Werritan, their commander, had gone to Washington to consult with the War Department, and it happened that General Early and the Confederate Army

were very wide awake and busy on that October night. At about four o'clock in the morning, a large division of confederates made ready for a surprise attack upon the Union left wing.

The men even removed their canteens, that they might make no noise. Not a shot was to be fired. The attack was to be with cold steel. One by one, they silently overpowered the pickets on the Union left and the first knowledge the sleeping corps had of the attack was when the confederates charged into their camp with set bayonets. Union soldiers awoke from their pleasant dreams of security to be bayoneted in their blankets, while others were clubbed to earth with the butts of muskets. In less time than it takes to tell it, where a moment before there had been peaceful tents and the green trees in the quiet woods, was a terrific, ghastly hand to hand struggle. The Confederates swept through the woods like a cyclone, and in half an hour's time, were in full possession of the camp.

Meanwhile, twenty miles away at the

town of Lancaster, General Bill Werritan had just alighted from a night train from Washington. With him were two of his staff officers. They at once took a carriage to the hotel where the General had left his horses during the Washington trip. As the General alighted from the carriage he clutched the arm of one of his lieutenants and cried in an excited voice, "Listen, what is that sound?"

"I didn't hear anything, General," replied the officer. "What did you think you heard?"

As the soldier spoke, a low, faint rumble floated down the valley to their ears.

"By thunder!" cried Werritan. "That's what it is. It is cannonading. Can Early have reorganized his men again after Lancaster?"

"I don't know, General," returned one of the officers.

"By thunder, I do," returned Werritan excitedly, "It's a surprise attack. Where's my horse? Here, you nigger, bring my horse."

"Ah'm very sorry, sar," said a colored boy coming up on the run, "but both of your hosses is no good. As you know de black was lame when you lef him and de gray has done got epizoot."

"Well, that's a pretty mess of fish. What am I going to do, lieutenant?"

"Here comes a hoss for you, boss," put in the colored boy as an old negro slowly led a beautiful chestnut gelding past the hotel.

"Here uncle, bring that horse here a minute. I want to see him," called the General.

Very much flattered by the attention he had created, our old friend Rastus from Eaton Manor, who left there to come to Virginia two months before to be near his young master, led Palo'mine up to General Weritan's side.

"Whose horse is this?" asked the General.

"Dat hoss, General," said Rastus proudly, drawing himself up to his full

height, "is de property of Major Halsey Eaton of de Buckeye Raiders, Sar."

"Can he run?" inquired Werritan.

"Run, General? Ah should say he could sar, you jes hit upon de right word, sar. Why, if dis 'ere hoss wuz on the tail end of a hurricane he could run right through it, sar, and split it into two pieces. He sure could. Ah guess you don't know dis hoss, General. Why, dis is Palo'mine what won de Kanetucky sweepstake in 1860, under de salberkat of King Crescent, Sar."

"Hurrah!" cried the General. "He's just the horse I want. Let me have that bridle."

The old darky drew back hurriedly. "No sar," he said. "Ah couldn't on any count. Massar Halsey Eaton, he done said to me when he left, 'Now Rastus, don't you let no man so much as put a hand on dis hoss. You feed him, and groom him, and exercise him yourself. Don't let anybody touch him. Massar Halsey 'low he couldn't fight at all on another hoss. Palo'mine he done

gone lame for a week but he is all right now."

"It's all right, uncle, you let me have him. I'll fix it up with Major Eaton. The rebs have attacked us and I have got to get to Pine River in no time. Give me that bridle."

"Ah couldn't no how," protested Rastus. "Massar Halsey he skin me alive."

"Men," said General Werritan turning to his officers, "we're losing valuable time. Take him prisoner. We'll confiscate the horse."

The men drew their swords and advanced upon poor Rastus with great seeming ferocity.

"O mercy General," wailed the old negro. "Spare my life, General, and you may have the hoss, but, Massar Halsey will skin me alive, sure as preachin."

"Put him in the guard house for a while and then let him go," said General Werritan winking at the officers.

So without further words, he put his hand upon the pommel of Halsey's saddle and

sprang lightly to Palo'mine's back, without even touching a stirrup. And they were off for Pine River, the Kentucky thoroughbred running in that long, swinging, easy gallop that eats up distance like the bounds of a greyhound.

The General sat his horse like a centaur, yet he rode with the ease of a cowboy. Palo'mine at once knew that he was being ridden by an experienced horseman. While as for the General, he had not been thirty seconds in the saddle when he saw that he was riding a wonderful horse. There was none of the jar that there usually is in a headlong gallop, but, merely a rhythmic motion which rose and fell as evenly as the swell of the ocean. From the ease of the movement they did not seem to be going very fast but the General noted with joy that the keen morning wind cut his face and sang in his ears. He had never in all his life seen, from the back of a horse, trees, fences and houses fly past in this manner. Pebbles and small stones flew from beneath the hoofs of the flying thoroughbred, while

a thin cloud of dust floated up behind them. On, on, they went. One mile, two miles, three miles, at this terrific pace. Then, as they reached a gentle grade the General allowed Palo'mine to slow down. He did not trot but merely reduced the speed to a slow canter. For a mile he held this pace, then, they reached a level stretch and were off again at the wild free gallop.

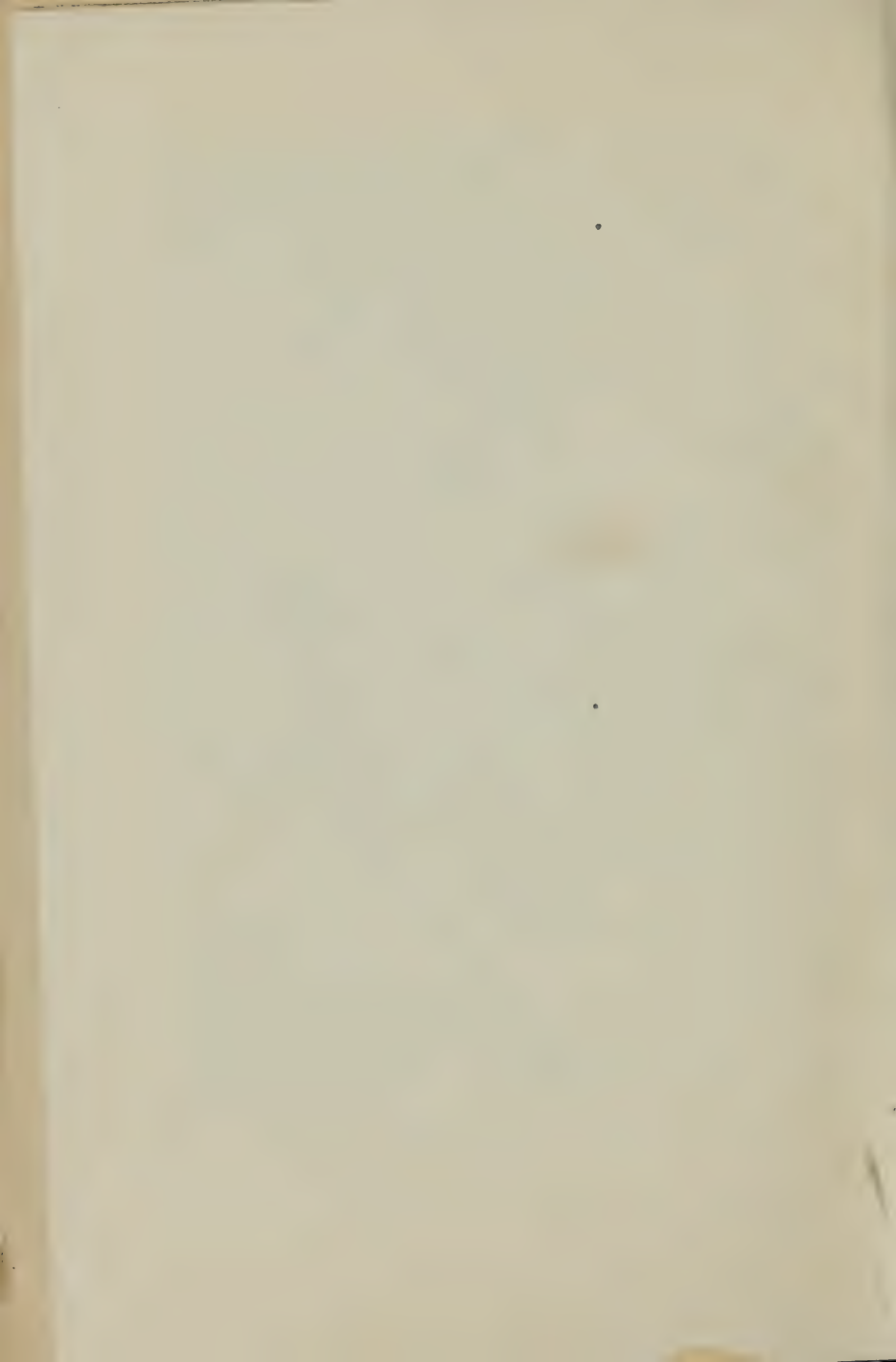
At the little hamlet of Brownville, five miles from Lancaster, the General pulled out his watch and gave a low whistle as he noted they had covered the five miles in thirteen minutes. But there was no pausing or rest for them. Away to the south the rumble of cannon grew louder each moment, so Palo'mine rushed on.

But Werritan was now fifteen miles away.

In the meanwhile, the unfortunate 19th corps had made a desperate stand before the only good crossing place on Pine River, but many of the men had lost their guns during the desperate assault upon the camp and most of the regiments had been broken up. So the stand was a futile one, for the confed-



On, on the Kentucky thoroughbred galloped.



erates brought both artillery and infantry into play and soon had them fleeing across the river. But Palo'mine and General Werritan were coming.

Both foot passengers and vehicles gave the General all the road as they saw him coming in a cloud of dust. Farmers paused in their barn chores to gaze after the flying horseman. Children who were fortunate enough to be up early on this eventful morning, pressed their small faces against the window pane and gazed with wide eyes and open mouth at the rushing horseman. Fortunate, indeed, were those who could say in after years that they had actually seen Werritan upon that famous ride.

On, on the Kentucky thoroughbred galloped. With each passing mile, the General expected to see him slow down. But he did not. Never had the great man strode such a horse. His gait was so easy and so swift it was a joy to the soldier to feel the cold morning wind cut his face and to see the trees and fences rush by. Seven miles, eight, nine, and ten were passed. They

were now at the village of Hastings, just half way to Pine River. The General again looked at his watch. Ten miles in twenty-seven minutes. It was incredible. Was it wise to let this willing horse run so fast? But the need was great and Palo'mine showed no signs of slackening. So the General gave him the rein and they flew onward.

In the meantime, the beleaguered 19th corps had taken up a strong position on the north side of Pine River. But the confederates continued to shell their position and send volleys of minie balls humming across the river at them. Soon the confederates' cavalry was crossing the river still further to the Union left and the Federal position was even more desperate. But Werritan was coming.

Eight miles from Pine River the General met an orderly upon a dripping foam covered horse.

"Hurry, General," he cried. "Hurry, our left wing has been badly beaten. We

are being driven back. It is endangering the center and the right."

"God, why don't they fight?" roared the General. But the orderly heard no more for the rest of the great man's remarks were drowned in the sound of galloping hoofs. The orderly turned his jaded horse back to follow his commander to the front. Palo'mine was a score of rods away. Vainly the orderly urged his good horse with spur and whip. Further and further the cloud of dust drew ahead of them and in two minutes' time Palo'mine and the General were out of sight.

But the Kentucky thoroughbred was now showing signs of the great strain upon him. He also was dripping with sweat and the inside of his legs was white with lather. The General knew that the need for speed was very great, yet he did not even urge the horse. He knew that he would do all he could without urging. Six miles from Pine River was a little up grade and here Palo'mine again slowed down to a canter and

so regained his wind. Finally the cross road to Hazeltown was reached. They were now five miles from Pine River. Once more the General consulted his watch. Fifteen miles in forty-two minutes. It was incredible.

In the meantime, the Confederate cavalry had crossed Pine River and were scattering the 19th corps. The Union cavalry had engaged them and the battle swayed back and forth. The position of the center and the right had now become untenable, so the 8th and 7th corps were also crossing the river. Confusion reigned. The master mind was not there. The army had lost its purpose and its will. But Werritan was coming.

Three miles from Pine River the General and Palo'mine met the first stragglers fleeing from the confederates.

"My God, boys, what are you doing? You are going the wrong way. Come back with me. The battle is not lost. Come back!" If the General said more the stragglers did not know, for he passed them

and was out of shouting distance almost before they knew he was coming.

Now the stragglers became more numerous. At each furlong they met them, disheartened and crushed, fleeing from the Confederates. But the General called to each serried band, imploring, commanding them to come back with him. All caught his enthusiasm, his fighting spirit, and this army of stragglers rolled up like a great snowball as the General swept on.

But now Palo'mine had begun to show signs of the terrible strain. The wild, free gallop had diminished to a slow canter and the General had to occasionally touch him with the spur to keep him going at this pace.

Half a mile from Pine River the faithful horse suddenly slowed down and turned in at a bar way by the side of the road. Werritan jerked on the bit and applied the spur freely before he could get him to go on. He seemed possessed to stop at this bar way, but finally he went wearily forward.

Just fifty-eight minutes from the time they had left Lancaster, General Werritan

sprang from Palo'mine's back on the outskirts of the battle field of Pine River and called loudly for another horse.

An orderly came clattering up and dismounting, gave the General his horse and he disappeared in the melee of the battle field.

Every student of history knows what happened during the next hour. Of how he rode up and down the line, cheering his men, making speeches to them, reorganizing the regiments, coördinating the army once more, and how the soldiers worked. How they cheered as he rode by for the soul had come back to the army. The master mind was once more in command.

When all was in readiness they charged back across the river and fell upon the confederates who were still routing the Union camp. It was not a battle but a complete rout. Thousands of Early's men were captured and many of his guns, while the Confederate General himself was killed. Thus ended the power of Confederacy in the

Shenandoah Valley and it was brave old Palo'mine who had saved the day.

Meanwhile, the faithful horse stood by the roadside where the General had left him. His head was down, he was panting and gasping for breath, he was as wet as a drowned rat and white with lather and foam. His sides were streaked with blood where the General's spurs had pricked him. Three troopers who were riding by stopped to look at him.

"Godfrey, Bill," said the first. "That horse is done for. Some fool has ridden him to death. He will be so foundered that he won't be worth a dollar."

"Guess you're right," returned Bill. "If he was mine, I'd pull off his shoes and feed him to the crows."

"You fellows has both of you got another guess coming," said the third trooper. "I hail from old Kentuck' and ef I know a Kentucky thoroughbred when I see one, he is that kind of a hoss. I've often seen hunters blown as badly as that in a fox

hunt. He'll be all right in an hour or two." And the troopers rode on.

Fifteen minutes later Palo'mine wearily raised his head and drew a long deep breath, then, he shook himself as though shaking off the terrible fatigue that had clutched him. He looked at the battle cloud to the south and to the peaceful fields to the east and west as though he were looking for something. Then, turned slowly about and trotted briskly back towards Lancaster. At the bar way where he had tried to stop with the General he turned in. It was only four bars high and ordinarily he would have jumped it like a deer, had he wished to, but now he stood looking at the bar way forlornly for at least a minute. Perhaps he was thinking, who shall say, for then he went up to it and taking the top bar in his teeth shook it vigorously. After a few shakes the offending bar came loose at one end and he dropped it on the ground. If a horse may ever be said to smile, Palo'mine smiled at this achievement. Then he treated the second bar in the same manner, after

which he stepped airily over the other two into the meadow beyond. Midway in the meadow the rowan was trampled by many hoofs. There were dead and wounded soldiers and horses lying about, while several riderless horses, still bridled and saddled, were cropping the grass. But, this was a familiar scene to Palo'mine. Whenever he came to a wounded man lying in his path he would trot carefully around him. At the further side of the meadow was a low stone wall and this Palo'mine jumped, into a pasture beyond. Here there were more dead and wounded men and stray horses. Forty rods from the wall, in a little ravine by the side of a small brook, Palo'mine found what he was searching for. It was a wounded trooper, lying in a small pool of his own blood. Palo'mine stood over him for several minutes looking down at him wistfully, waiting for him to move, but he gave no sign. Then the horse carefully stood parallel to the trooper and went down upon his knees, waiting for Halsey to mount. But still the trooper made no sign.

Presently when his hind quarters had begun to tremble from standing in this strained position, he reached over and gently touched the man on his face with his lips. This was a kissing trick that Halsey had taught him. To the horse's great joy, the man opened his eyes and smiled up at him. Then after a moment he reached up his hand and patted the horse's nose.

"Why, faithful old Palo'mine, you good old scout. You have come for me," said the soldier feebly. "I prayed to God to send some one and he has sent you. I will be ready in a minute." Then the soldier again closed his eyes, but his hands kept a tight hold on Palo'mine's bridle rein.

Presently, with great difficulty, Halsey raised himself upon his elbow and then by degrees, with both hands, pushed his body up into a sitting position. Then, he gradually worked his body toward the horse, until he could put his elbows over the saddle. Next, he dragged his legs up to the cantle of the saddle and wearily mounted. Then he clucked to the horse. Very gently Pal-

o'mine got to his feet. Halsey did not try to guide him, but gave him his head and he never quite knew what happened during the next three hours.

Palo'mine trotted across the pasture, he then skirted the wall until he came to a gap that the soldiers had made that morning where he passed through. Straight to the bar way he trotted and then down the road to Lancaster.

Three hours from the time that he had picked Halsey up on the battle field, he trotted into Lancaster and the trooper had just life and intelligence enough left to guide him to the field hospital. Here, willing hands lifted Halsey from the saddle, while he gave directions for them to send Palo'mine around to the stable where he knew Rastus must be waiting for him. A few minutes later a surgeon was carefully dressing Halsey's wound and checking the flow of blood.

"That's not a bad wound," he remarked, as he worked. "You'll be all right in a week or two, but the bullet must have cut

a small artery. They picked you up just in time. I think you would have bled to death in another hour."

"It was my faithful horse that did it," whispered Halsey. "He saved my life."

Meanwhile, Palo'mine, in a comfortable stall, was enjoying a fine feed of oats and the best rub-down he had ever had at the hands of old Rastus.

This had been the greatest day in his life, yet he did not know it. All he knew was that he had worked desperately hard and that he was very tired.

But, by carrying General Werritan twenty miles in fifty-eight minutes, he had saved the battle of Pine River, while by picking Halsey up and carrying him to Lancaster he had saved his beloved master's life.

CHAPTER XIII

BACK TO EATON MANOR

IT was May-time in the Blue Grass country and the Kentucky Cardinal was telling the glad news to all who would listen. He was whistling away in his shrill, clear voice as though his little heart would burst were it denied the ecstasy of pouring out the joy in his heart to the beautiful old world. All the rest of the feathered songsters were joining in the red bird's glad morning song. Cattle were lowing in the pastures, colts and calves were capering in the paddocks; while roosters were crowing lustily in all the farm yards.

It seemed to Halsey as he and Palo'mine jogged along the turnpike that the fields had never looked so green, or the sky so blue, or the whole scene so wonderful before. But it was probably the joy in his own heart

that colored the scene and made it seem so glorious on that May morning. The war was over; this cruel heart-breaking struggle that had kept him from Eaton Manor for four years. Yes, he was coming home at last; he was almost home in fact. Only one good English mile from the dear, old place.

"Come on, Palo'mine," he called cheerily. "Just a little more speed, we're almost home." They had been riding day and night for three days. Palo'mine quickened his pace as though he too, appreciated the fact that the home stall was calling to him.

Half a mile further on Halsey caught sight of the gray gables and the great brick chimneys just seen through the tree tops. So he again called to Palo'mine who this time broke into his wild, free gallop.

Peggy was up stairs watching for them. She had been watching for the better part of three days, in fact. She espied Palo'mine coming like the wind. When they were about an eighth of a mile from Eaton Manor, although she ran down stairs as nimbly as her young legs would carry her,

yet Palo'mine came racing into the yard just as she reached the piazza steps.

Halsey dismounted and stood at attention, with one hand on the bridle, waiting to greet her.

Although her heart was nearly bursting with joy, yet Peggy came rather shyly across the lawn and saluted him with a kiss upon the cheek.

"Oh Halsey," she cried joyously. "Is it true or am I dreaming? Are you and Palo'mine home and are you safe and sound? Is this dreadful war really over?"

"Yes, here we are," cried Halsey gleefully. "Two war-scarred old veterans, but safe and sound, thank God. We've had our scratches but we've come through in good shape."

"Why, what a beauty Palo'mine is," said the girl, walking around him and straightening out his mane and foretop and patting his nose. "I had forgotten what a perfect horse he is."

Halsey said nothing, but while Peggy was admiring Palo'mine, he admired her.

From the careless, wilful, pretty Peggy Moore of eight years before, she had grown into a sweet, serious girl of twenty-two. The sorrow of the past four years and the strain of the long waiting had chastened and refined her. It was a rare, sweet soul that looked out at the trooper through her smiling face.

"Did Palo'mine get wounded any?" she inquired at last when she had admired all his fine points.

"Oh yes," said Halsey, "He got his scratches with the rest of us. Here old Pal, hold down your head," he said to the horse, touching him lightly on his nose. Palo'mine held down his head as he did when he said grace. The trooper straightened out one of his expressive ears and showed a small hole in it.

"That was made by a minie ball at Look-off Mountain," he said simply.

"Oh," cried Peggy, "I'm glad it was no lower down."

Next Halsey opened up the thoroughbred's mane and showed that one layer of

the thick hair had been cut off for about six inches, as cleanly as though with shears. "A bullet from a hunting rifle in the Tennessee Mountains did that," he said.

"Where did the bullet go to?" asked Peggy innocently.

"I dug it out of the pommel of my saddle, the next day," said Halsey. "It nearly got me."

"Oh," cried Peggy and she edged a little nearer to the trooper.

"Hold up your foot," said Halsey, slapping the horse on his shoulder. He then showed Peggy a slight furrow in the horse's hoof close to the shoe.

"That is a new one," he said. "It was made at Five Points. It will grow out in a few weeks. Now look on his rump on the right side." Peggy did as requested and discovered a narrow, white line running for six inches across the horse's rump.

"A bit of shrapnel did that, at Wilson's Bluff. We went through hell that time, old Palo'mine and I."

"Oh," cried Peggy. "What a terrible

thing war is. But do you really think that Palo'mine is all right? Is he just as good as ever?"

Halsey threw back his head and laughed in his old boyish manner and the sound of his mirth made a great lump come in Peggy's throat. It was good to know that he could still laugh after these four dreadful years.

"Good as ever," cried Halsey. "Why he is better than ever. I even believe he could lower his old record for a mile and an eighth in the sweepstake. I am going to try him again next year, if we have luck, and you can sit in the grand stand and watch Palo'mine and me clean up the field."

"But are you all right, Halsey? You are looking fine." Again the trooper laughed in the glad boyish way.

"Fit as a fiddle," he cried. "Never felt better in my life. Hard as nails and ready for anything."

"But Halsey, oh, oh, what is that dreadful scar on your neck?" The girl reached up with trembling fingers and turned back

the collar on the trooper's shirt. It disclosed a three-inch scar along his neck, just above the shoulder.

"Oh, that's nothing," said Halsey, pulling her hand away and turning up the collar quickly. "That's only a sabre scratch. I got that in a little cavalry tilt. A big brute of a fellow came down on my pal, Billie Jones, and was about to chop his head off with his sabre when I intercepted the blow."

"You brave boy," choked the girl. "What a terrible thing war is." She noted with a little thrill of joy that Halsey still held the hand that had turned down his collar.

"My," cried Halsey, "but it is good to be home again. We are going to miss Uncle Hillery and Aunt Julia though. It leaves you and I all alone at Eaton Manor, Peg."

"Yes," returned the girl shyly.

"What was it that Uncle Hillery wanted to see me about the time I came home, when the guerrillas nearly got me? You said you would tell me when I came home."

"I'd rather not tell you now," said Peggy, blushing. "Wait a bit."

But Halsey only took a firmer grip upon her arm and turned her about so he could look into her face.

"I think I know what it was, Margaret," he said tenderly. "I often used to catch Uncle Hillery watching us slyly out of the corner of his eye when I came home from college that last year. I think the dear old man had a romance fixed up between us."

Peggy hung her head but said nothing.

"Wasn't that it, Margaret?"

"Perhaps," whispered the girl.

"I thought so," cried Halsey. "Do you remember, Margaret, that you told me you loved me, that night when you thought the guerrillas were going to get me?"

"Yes, yes," faltered the girl. "But that was not fair, you made me. I wanted you to hurry."

"But you said it," persisted Halsey, "and you are looking it now. Peggy, when Dorothy Perkins has garlanded Eaton Manor with festoons of glory, and all the

air is sweet with perfume, Uncle Sam's trooper in blue will marry the little rebel from Dixie and our union will be a symbol of that greater Union; the reunited North and South. Just as you and I will go hand in hand for the rest of our lives, the North and South will go forward, hand in hand, and shoulder to shoulder, forever."

And Peggy said "yes," but not in words.

"Massar Halsey," called a mellow negro voice from the stable; the voice of Rastus. "Ah'se goin' whistle to Palo'mine and you let him go. Ah want ter see if he 'members his old stall."

"Of course he remembers it," cried Halsey indignantly. "He remembers it just as well as I do my old bed-room." And he let go Palo'mine's bridle rein, while Rastus whistled shrilly to him.

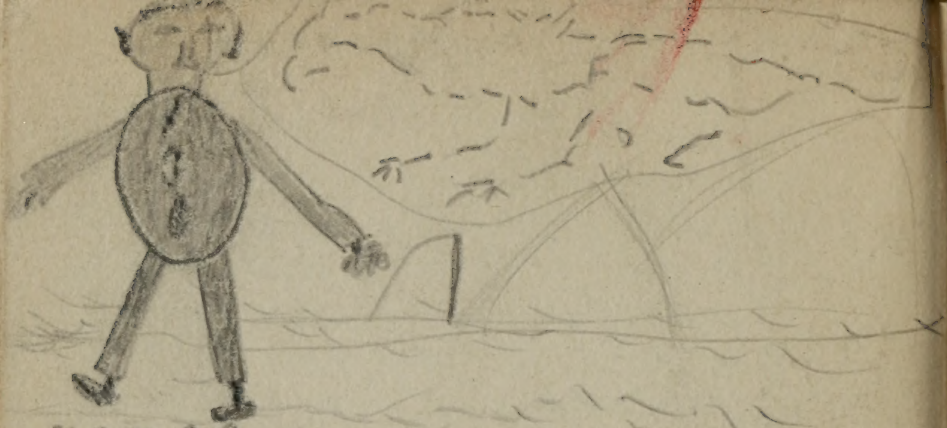
Then, the world's greatest running horse who had carried his master on bloody battle fields, amid shot and shell for four years; the steed who had saved the Union left at Mackanaw Mountain; who had helped retrieve the seemingly lost battle of Pine River

by carrying General Werritan twenty miles in fifty-eight minutes; the faithful horse who had then picked up his master on the battle field and borne him back to Lancaster, trotted gladly across the turnpike to the stable in answer to old Rastus' call. For notwithstanding his laurels he was still in his nature just a home-loving, comfort-loving horse, who knew that a good feed awaited him in the old box stall and a faithful rub-down at the hands of his old groom.

There let us leave him, munching oats. He has well earned his rest and he will enjoy it to the full.

THE END





MR. E. BRONNY

Glenn Carpenter

GLENN

CARPENTER

